Daily Report

Central Eurasia

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CONTENTS

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PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION ISSUES

Russia: Gorbachev Attacked by Unemployed 'Hooligan' in Omsk *[Moscow RTV]* 1
Russia: Gorbachev Blames Communist Supporters for Attack *[INTERFAX]* 1
Russia: Shumeyko Campaigns for Yeltsin in Vladimir Oblast *[ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA 23 Apr]* 1
Russia: Sergey Filatov Campaigns for Yeltsin in Novgorod *[ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI 24 Apr]* 2
Russia: Chelyabinsk Election 'Congress' Acclaims Zyuganov *[PRAVDA 23 Apr]* 3
Russia: Lebed Interviewed on Elections, Media Coverage, Other Issues *[RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA 23 Apr]* 4
Russia: Electoral Commission Limits Candidates' Campaign Scope *[SEGODNYA 24 Apr]* 6
Russia: Voting Procedure Intended To Preclude Ballot-Rigging *[ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI 24 Apr]* 7

INTERREGIONAL AFFAIRS

CIS: ITAR-TASS Carries Press Review for 25 Apr 8

RUSSIA INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Russia: Yeltsin Welcomed in China With 21-Gun Salute *[ITAR-TASS]* 10
Russia: Jiang Zemin Greets Yeltsin in Beijing *[ITAR-TASS]* 10
Russia: Yeltsin Says China Backs Nuclear Test Ban Idea *[ITAR-TASS]* 10
Russia: Yeltsin Says No Disputed Issues Between Russia, China *[ITAR-TASS]* 10
Russia: Yeltsin: China Backs Russian Opposition to NATO Expansion *[Moscow RTV]* 11
Russia: PRC's Jiang Zemin Calls Yeltsin Visit 'Complete Success' *[ITAR-TASS]* 11
Russia: Yeltsin Describes Talks With Chinese Leaders *[Radio Rossii]* 11
Russia: Deputy Foreign Minister Addresses Concerns on PRC Border *[Moscow Radio]* 12
Russia: Nuclear Power Minister Praises Accord With PRC *[ITAR-TASS]* 12
Russia: Relations With PRC To Reach 'New Heights' *[KRASNAYA ZVEZDA 25 Apr]* 13
Russia: PRC Attitudes, Hopes on Russia Detailed *[ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA 20 Apr]* 14
Russia: Russian Su-27 Planes Arrive in China *[ITAR-TASS]* 17
Russia: India To Buy SU-30MK Fighter-Bombers; Plane Shown in Flight *[Moscow RTV]* 17
Russia: Nuclear Exchange Agreement With Ukraine in Jeopardy *[ITAR-TASS]* 17
Russia: Controversy Surrounds Extradition of Aliyev Opponents *[KOMMERSANT-DAILY 24 Apr]* . 17
Russia: Yeltsin 'Got All He Could' From G-7 Summit *[SEGODNYA 23 Apr]* 18
Russia: Clinton Said To Leave No Doubt of Support for Yeltsin *[MOSKOVSKIY KOMSOMOLETS 23 Apr]* 19
Russia: Moscow G-7 Summit Seen as Yeltsin Benefit Performance *[NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA 23 Apr]* 19

RUSSIA NATIONAL AFFAIRS

Political Issues

Russia: Yeltsin Visit to Khabarovsk, Meeting With Citizens Viewed *[Moscow ORT]* 21
Russia: Yeltsin Signs Law on Raising Minimum Wage *[ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA 24 Apr]* 21
Russia: Yeltsin Edict Offers Farmers More 'Favorable Conditions' *[ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA 23 Apr]* 22
Russia: Court Rules in Favor of President on Lawmaking Procedure *[NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA 23 Apr]* 24

Russia: Zhirinovskiy Plans East European Counterweight to NATO *[Bratislava NARODNA OBRODA 24 Apr]* 25

Military & Space Issues

Russia: Commander Praises Black Sea Fleet Crews on Exercise *[Moscow ORT]* 26
Russia: Military Leaders View Current Draft Problems *[KRASNAYA ZVEZDA 24 Apr]* 26
Russia: Defence Ministry Launches Cosmos Satellite 24 Apr *[ITAR-TASS]* 28

Federal Assembly

Russia: Duma's Belovezhskaya Accords 'Primarily Political' *[ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA 24 Apr]* 28
Russia: Shokhin Sees Duma Short on Lawmaking, Long on Politics *[KOMMERSANT-DAILY 23 Apr]* 29
Russia: Duma Adopts Personal Security Law on Top Officials *[ITAR-TASS]* 30
Russia: Duma Passes Law on National, Cultural Autonomy *[ITAR-TASS]* 30
Russia: Duma Approves Law on Exclusive Economic Zone *[ITAR-TASS]* 30

Regional Affairs

Russia: Shamil Basayev Says 'Nothing' About Dudayev's Death *[TURAN]* 30
Russia: Paper Suggests Dudayev Spirited Abroad, Not Dead *[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA 25 Apr]* 31
Russia: Duma Security Chief Doubts Dudayev Death Reports *[Moscow Radio]* 31
Russia: Doubts About Dudayev's Death Summarized *[IZVESTIYA 25 Apr]* 31
Russia: Dudayev's Brother Confirms Leader's Death *[Moscow NTV]* 34
Russia: Chechen Muslim Elders Acknowledge Dudayev's Death *[INFORMATSIONNOYE AGENTSTVO EKHO MOSKVY]* 35
Russia: Interior Minister Confirms Dudayev Killed *[ITAR-TASS]* 35
Russia: Circumstances of Dudayev's Death Detailed *[Moscow NTV]* 35
Russia: Kovalev: Dudayev's Death Removes Doubts About Zavgayev *[INTERFAX]* 35
Russia: Yandarbiyev Gives First Interview as Dudayev Successor *[ITAR-TASS]* 36
Russia: Dudayev Successor Yandarbiyev Said Seriously Wounded *[Moscow RTV]* 37
Russia: Tatar President Quits Mediator Mission After Dudayev Death *[ITAR-TASS]* 37
Russia: Grachev Complains of Being 'Misrepresented' on Chechnya *[KRASNAYA ZVEZDA 25 Apr]* 37
Russia: Yeltsin Agrees To Finance Chechen Reconstruction *[INTERFAX]* 38

Economic Issues

Russia: Comptroller Cited on Budget Revenue Shortfall *[FINANSOVYYE IZVESTIYA 23 Apr]* 39
Russia: Declining Quality, Short Supply May Force Grain Imports *[MOSKOVSKIY KOMSOMOLETS 24 Apr]* 40

UKRAINE

International Affairs

Ukraine: Kuchma Addresses European Assembly *[Kiev TV]* 42
Ukraine: Kuchma: CIS Fails as Association of Former Soviet Republics *[INTERFAX]* 45
Ukraine: Kuchma: NATO Entry Procedure Should Resemble EU *[INTERFAX]* 45
Ukraine: Kuchma: Ukraine's Strategic Aim is To Join EU *[UNIAN]* 46
Ukraine: Kuchma: No Acknowledgement of Romanian Territorial Claims *[INTERFAX]* 46
Ukraine: Kuchma on Locating Russia's Black Sea Fleet in Sevastopol *[INTERFAX]* 46
Ukraine: Moroz Worried Over Possible NATO Expansion to East *[INTELNEWS]* 46
Ukraine: Moroz Discusses Chernobyl With French Officials *[UNIAN]* 46
Ukraine: Official on Abiding by Nuclear Arms Withdrawal Schedule *[INTERFAX]* 47

Ukraine: Nuclear, High-Tech Cooperation With China Needed *[URYADOVYY KURYER 20 Apr]* 47
Ukraine: U.S. Ambassador Interviewed on Policies *[Warsaw GAZETA WYBORCZA 24 Apr]* 48

National Affairs

Ukraine: Fire Levels 5 Villages Near Chernobyl Zone *[SEGODNYA 25 Apr]* 49
Ukraine: Officials Cited on Cause, Threat of Chernobyl Fires *[INTELNEWS]* 49
Ukraine: Air Radiation Level Increased Around Chernobyl Due to Fires *[INTERFAX]* 50
Ukraine: Chernobyl Plant Incident Causes 'Slight' Radiation Increase *[ITAR-TASS]* 50
Ukraine: Spokesman Discusses Chernobyl Plant Radiation Incident *[ITAR-TASS]* 51
Ukraine: National Security Advisor Assesses Chernobyl's Safety *[INTELNEWS]* 51

WESTERN REGION

Belarus

Belarus: Foreign Ministry Calls Paznyak Tour 'Wittingly Slanderous' *[BELAPAN]* 52
Belarus: Popular Front Briefs on Paznyak's Foreign 'Tour,' *[BELAPAN]* 52

Moldova

Moldova: President Thinks Relations With Romania Need 'New Impetus' *[INTERFAX]* 52
Moldova: Moldovan, Transdniester Officials Meet, No Progress Made *[INTERFAX]* 53

CENTRAL ASIA

Kazakhstan

Kazakhstan: Nazarbayev: Yeltsin To Formalize Oil Pipeline Participation *[INTERFAX]* 54
Kazakhstan: Nazarbayev Leaves for Shanghai To Discuss Border Issues *[ITAR-TASS]* 54

Tajikistan

Tajikistan: Rakhmanov Welcomes OSCE Efforts in Central Asia *[INTERFAX]* 55
Tajikistan: Tajik Rebel Leader Welcomes New UN Envoy *[Voice of Free Tajikistan]* 55

Uzbekistan

Uzbekistan: Karimov, Chirac Hold Talks in Paris *[NARODNOYE SLOVO 23 Apr]* 55
Tajikistan: Karimov Ends Visit to France, Urges More Investment *[INTERFAX]* 56
Uzbekistan: Prime Minister Reads Karimov Statement at Symposium *[INTERFAX]* 56

CAUCASUS

Azerbaijan

Azerbaijan: President Aliyev Visits European Countries *[Baku Radio]* 58
Azerbaijan: Aliyev, Norwegian Minister Discuss Oil Cooperation *[ITAR-TASS]* 58
Azerbaijan: Aircraft Comes Under Fire From Armenian Forces *[ITAR-TASS]* 58

Georgia

Georgia: Shevardnadze Speaks of Value of Accord With EU *[Tbilisi Radio]* 58
Georgia: Shevardnadze Views Chechen Settlement After Dudayev Death *[ITAR-TASS]* 59
Georgia: Shevardnadze To Meet With S. Ossetian Leader *[IBERIA]* 59
Georgia: Finland Grants Political Asylum to Former Prime Minister *[Moscow Radio]* 60

BALTICS STATES

Estonia

Estonia: Temporary Fishing Agreement With Latvia Established *[Tallinn TV]* 61
Estonia: Russian Minority Threatens To Pull Out of Conference *[INTERFAX]* 61

Russia: Gorbachev Attacked by Unemployed 'Hooligan' in Omsk

LD2504095496 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 0700 GMT 25 Apr 96

[From the "Vesti" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] In connection with the hooligan's attack on him in Omsk yesterday, Russian presidential candidate Mikhail Gorbachev has cut short his electoral trip. Yesterday, our correspondent met the ex-USSR president at a Moscow airport. [video shows Gorbachev talking to reporters]

[begin recording] [Gorbachev] A sturdy chap was standing quite normally. I didn't even pay any attention to him. A really hefty fellow. I was passing by, going around him somewhat, and then suddenly he turned and hit me right here. [video shows Gorbachev pointing to back of his head, just behind left ear] I just thought: the fact that he hit me here... [changes thought] Maybe the blow slipped, but it was the blow of a professional. There seemed to be lights flashing in my head.

It turns out that they found a knife on him. They didn't tell us anything about it. There was a knife in his pocket.

[Correspondent A. Zhukov] The attacker was Mikhail Malkov, aged 20 and unemployed, who, according to information not yet checked, is on the mental patients' waiting list. But Mikhail Gorbachev is most unwilling to regard the incident as a hooligan outburst:

[Gorbachev] They're out to get me, you know. I can't look at it in any other way.

[Zhukov] That is why, in a statement addressed to the president, Mikhail Gorbachev describes the attack as an attempt on the life of a candidate, demanding that Boris Yeltsin stop using such abrasive political arguments. [video shows Raisa Gorbacheva looking agitated; a copy of a statement drafted by Gorbachev about the attack; unidentified people talking to one another; Gorbachev, carrying flowers, being escorted somewhere] [end recording]

Russia: Gorbachev Blames Communist Supporters for Attack

LD2404193796 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1757 GMT 24 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] OMSK, April 24 (Interfax-Eurasia) — Ex-Soviet President and Russian presidential candidate Mikhail Gorbachev told journalists before leaving the Siberian city of Omsk that the supporters of Communist leaders Gennadiy Zyuganov and Viktor Anpilov were to blame for the fact that he could not hold a meeting with Omsk residents.

A resident of Omsk struck Gorbachev across the face in the hall of a political center before the meeting started.

The man was apprehended by Gorbachev's bodyguards and police. He is being identified. The man did not tell Interfax-Eurasia why he did it.

Before flying out from Omsk, Gorbachev said that the incident should be "given a political evaluation" and that the Russian president must use his powers to make sure that the electoral race proceeds in a civilized way.

Gorbachev also said that he expects President Boris Yeltsin to speak on the incident.

Russia: Shumeyko Campaigns for Yeltsin in Vladimir Oblast

MM2404140996 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 23 Apr 96 p 2

[Report by Anna Kozyreva: "54 Days to the Election. Politicians Go Out to the People. Vladimir Shumeyko Hunts for Sympathies"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Boris Yeltsin's official representatives were in Vladimir Oblast at the same time: Nikolay Travkin in Suzdal and Vladimir Shumeyko in Vladimir. And during those same days State Duma Deputy Viktor Ilyukhin, member of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation, was in Vladimir participating in a conference of the movement "Justice and People's Power," at which local self-government heads and "activists from other public organizations" had gathered.

Curiously, the different programs coincided on certain points: The Communists met with workers and students, and Vladimir Shumeyko met with students, and then workers.

As we know, Vladimir Filippovich finds it easy to talk to people. He answers any question, including sarcastic ones. He frequently jokes and sometimes even tells anecdotes. And no matter what he may be talking about, he does not forget to emphasize that "you must vote for Yeltsin." It would seem that everything is as it should be, or even better.

But the question of whom Vladimir's residents will vote for nevertheless remains a closed book. Why?

The city of Vladimir is a typical Russian city: neither large nor small. It has a population of 400,000. There are several major plants, which are experiencing far from excellent times. Take, for example, the "Vladimirskiy traktornyy zavod" ["Vladimir Tractor Plant"] joint stock company. Its planned production capacity is 36,000 wheeled tractors a year, and at the moment it is barely

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making 6,000. That being the case, the working day only extends until lunchtime. There are interruptions in the payment of wages, and even then they only constitute 1,100 rubles [R]. The newly emerged shareholders were trying to find out how to survive. Vladimir Shumeyko himself made a showy gesture there — he bought tractor loan bonds to the tune of R1.2 and promised to help conclude a special agreement between the plant, the oblast government, and the federal government. He also said that the "course of the reforms would be corrected."

But, judging by the reaction of the audience, they had not heard anything about what they consider to be the most important thing for them. Of course, promises are all very well. But we have somehow gotten used to them. For over 70 years the Communists asked the people to tighten their belts and wait a little longer for the "radiant future." And a fair number of promises were handed out during the 10 years of perestroyka. Skepticism is understandable, but how is it to be overcome? You could say that the correct answer to that question is one ingredient of a successful election campaign. And the first lesson learned from this trip.

The next event was a roundtable. We journalists thought that representatives of "various social groups" would really be present at it, as was indicated in the program for the stay. We had hoped to hear all kinds of viewpoints here, an argument, and to sense the mood of the "ordinary voters." It was not to be! Sitting at the roundtable were staid people who were demonstrating to each other why the current president should be supported. Whose fault was it that it turned out like that, that the very people for whose sake Vladimir Shumyeko came here and whom he intended to canvass were in fact not there?

It is quite likely that, in accordance with the old custom, the oblast administration took it upon itself to choose candidates for this meeting, so as not to fall flat on its face in front of the important guest. The question is: Is it worth spending a great deal of time and money on meeting your ideological supporters? Hence also the second obvious lesson — you should nevertheless not be canvassing people who agree with you anyway.

The third lesson was given by the students. The meeting with them was scheduled during lecture time. The rector canceled the classes. The girls sitting next to me said that their teacher "recommended" that they come to this meeting, because "politics is more important than anything else today." They told me their problems: In the past their grants were R53,000, but they were also compensated for food, so it worked out at R75,000 in all. Now it seems the grants have been raised to R63,000, but no compensation is being paid.... Before Shumeyko's visit, the students went to listen to Khakamada [leader of "Common Cause" public association set up in May 1995 to campaign for State Duma elections]. They liked Irina. By the way, she hinted that she is supporting Yavlinskiy. But the girls were not too well disposed toward Yeltsin because of the grants story. So they did not listen very attentively to the excellent (really!) speech made by Shumeyko. There's the third lesson: "Whenever you want something to turn out really well, it turns out as normal."

Russia: Sergey Filatov Campaigns for Yeltsin in Novgorod

MM2404143996 Moscow ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI ("Political Wednesday" section) in Russian 24 Apr 96 p 1

[Report by Valeriya Klebanova: "No Time Left To Combat Incompetence"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Novgorod — Sergey Filatov, director of the coordinating center of the public movement in support of Boris Yeltsin's Russian presidential election campaign, has visited Novgorod. His arrival coincided with an oblast youth conference intended to support the incumbent president's candidacy in the forthcoming elections. The large audience at the conference and the presence of top officials of the oblast, city, and rayon administrations and leaders of major enterprises confirmed that Boris Nikolayevich can count on the support of Novgorod people.

Representatives of the oblast youth union addressed the conference and stated that they support the democratic reforms and associate them with Yeltsin's personally. Their slogan at the conference was "Young People Will Decide the Outcome of the Elections."

Entrepreneurs Mark Masarskiy and Vladimir Nekrasov — the latter is general director of the "Novgorodskiy Myasnoy Dvor" ["Novgorod Meat Depot"] Joint-Stock Company — addressed the audience. Their sympathies were also with the president. The reaction in the hall showed once again that concrete facts and incisive words are the weapons that you have to master if you take up the difficult duties of a campaigner.

Sergey Filatov, the "chief coordinator" of President Yeltsin's election campaign, addressed the audience and, afterward, journalists. Among other things journalists were concerned about the question of the reliability of presidential opinion polls. Sergey Aleksandrovich's answer that the coordinating center relies on the data of the All-Russia Center for the Study of Public Opinion on Social and Economic Questions and has no confidence in their accuracy did little to reassure local journalists.

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Unfortunately, the old ideological propaganda methods that we learned are no longer always suitable. We still have not produced our own regional specialists employing new methods. There is very little time left before the elections and Boris Nikolayevich has consciously separated himself from the political parties. This is why the accurate and impartial analysis of the situation is so important.

Russia: Chelyabinsk Election 'Congress' Acclaims Zyuganov

MM2404132796 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 23 Apr 96 p 2

[Commentary by Anatoliy Belozertsev: "'It Is Russia That Is the Most Important Party.' On Gennadiy Zyuganov's Trip to the Volga Region and the Urals"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Chelyabinsk — Gennadiy Zyuganov's three-day working visit to Samara, Ufa, and Chelyabinsk has ended. I witnessed his stay among us in the southern Urals.

In spite of the fact that the train from Ufa arrived in Chelyabinsk at 0630, quite a few people had gathered to meet him on the station platform. In accordance with the popular custom, our guest was presented with bread and salt and spring flowers. There were many placards with warms words of greeting.

When Gennadiy Andreyevich was asked how he had been received in Samara and Ufa he gave the thumbs-up. But the Chelyabinsk authorities did everything to make G. Zyuganov feel that he would find no support among inhabitants of the Urals. The "For the Rebirth of the Urals" public political movement, which had invited our guest to the city, was refused use of the spacious Theater of Opera and Ballet for a meeting with voters; under pressure from above, the leadership of a pipe-rolling plant, who only the day before had agreed to receive the opposition leader, went back on its word at the last moment; and up until the very moment of Gennadiy Andreyevich's arrival it was unclear whether Chelyabinsk television would allow him to appear live on air.

Your correspondent spoke up about the discrimination on the airwaves against Boris Yeltsin's most likely rival in the presidential election at a press conference attended by journalists representing the foreign, central Russian, and local press.

"Can the State Duma redress the balance?" I asked the Communist faction leader.

"The voters themselves can do so more quickly and effectively," Gennadiy Andreyevich replied. "After all, it is not only my rights as a presidential candidate but also your rights that are being infringed."

During a meeting with Oblast Duma deputies, Gennadiy Zyuganov replied as follows to the question "Will you be above party matters as president if elected, or will you carry out Politburo decisions?" posed by Magnitogorsk deputy V. Mazul:

"For me it is Russia that is the most important party; any person has values that are precious to him, irrespective of his party affiliation."

The popular-patriotic forces' leader had warm meetings with blue- and white-collar workers of "Stankomash" and a clock plant, and residents of the city by the Eternal Flame on the square named for the Ural Voluntary Tank Crewmen.

State Duma Deputies N. Berdnikova and L. Oleynik and performers A. Livanov and V. Frolov took part in these meetings alongside Gennadiy Zyuganov. The verse and songs performed by the actors set an informal and intimate tone for the meetings.

That evening Gennadiy Zyuganov addressed a congress of popular-patriotic forces at the railroad workers' Palace of Culture, in which representatives of nine Urals oblasts and republics participated. Zyuganov's appearance generated such interest among residents of Chelyabinsk that 30 minutes before the congress opened the palace's great hall was filled to bursting. People were ensconced in the aisles, on balconies, and in the lobby. For those who did not manage to get into the hall a transmission was arranged on the local radio network.

People listened very attentively to the profound and emotional speech of the people's candidate and applauded frequently.

In a resolution the congress delegates unanimously decided to support Gennadiy Zyuganov, the candidate for the left-wing bloc and the popular-patriotic forces. "We can and we must win the coming election!" they noted in their address to the inhabitants of the Urals.

One other thing. Participants in the meeting put forward an interesting proposal: to recommend that the presidential candidates Boris Yeltsin and Gennadiy Zyuganov meet in a live broadcast so that they can announce their election programs and outline their views on how to extricate the country from the crisis. Gennadiy Zyuganov willingly supported this proposal. It is now up to his opponent to declare.

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Russia: Lebed Interviewed on Elections, Media Coverage, Other Issues

MM2404140396 Moscow RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA in Russian 23 Apr 96 p 2

[Interview with Russian Federation presidential candidate Aleksandr Lebed by Hiroyuki Fuse, Nikolay Tsvetkov, and Timofey Kuznetsov jointly for RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA and YOMIURI SHIMBUN under the "Russian Federation Presidential Candidate" rubric; place and date not given: "Aleksandr Lebed: 'My Task Is To Impose Order'"]

[FBIS Translated Text] [RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA] You have been a professional politician for a relatively short time. What are your impressions of the Russian political elite? And what rules have you set for yourself in your new calling?

[Lebed] The game is being played without any rules. My second impression is that both democrats and Communists in Russia are part and parcel of one and the same party nomenklatura. The only difference is that some remained more so than others. They would very much like to see power passing from one set of hands to the other. But if we were to replace one former member of the CPSU Central Committee with another, nothing will actually change for us.

Our country is great, but there is no order in it. Nor will there be any for as long as it is ruled by Central Committee members. For some strange reason, Central Committee members are still presidents in the remnants of the once great country. There are only two exceptions — Akayev and Ter-Petrosyan.

I have set my own rules for myself. I will not reveal them to anyone. I believe that morality and politics are compatible. I believe that our people who, despite everything, are conscientious must have equally conscientious politicians. I believe that politics is a dirty business only for as long as it is done by dirty people.

We are once again asked to choose the lesser of two evils, to choose between the whites and reds. This has been our lot for almost 80 years now and nothing good has come out of it. Nor will it. It is necessary to think of how we are going to live, not of how to break one another. I have had enough of war, I have reached the conclusion that war is always a dead end at the beginning and a disaster at the end. Judging by the previous elections, this is also how at least 60 percent of voters think — those who either did not turn out to vote at all or split their votes among tiny parties as a sign of protest.

[RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA] Having joined the presidential race, what state tasks do you intend to resolve and how? In your view, what is to be done about the economy? About Chechnya, about crime?...

[Lebed] I am a professional in just one sphere. I am neither an economist nor a financier. Nor do I intend to argue with doctors of juridical, economic, and other sciences. My task is to impose order. And to give the best and most honest professionals an opportunity to do their own jobs.

Russia today needs a powerful stratum of owners. We need private property and protection of proprietors. Slaves and lackeys have never been proprietors, they do not need anything. But owners need things. There is a purpose to their lives. We need a strong, a very strong authority which would protect proprietors. Today the state has assigned these most important functions to gangsters.

You cannot order capital to flow. It will flow wherever it finds things advantageous and safe. Conditions ought to be created for this — through low taxes, through strong authority, through private property. Once the outflow of our own capital has stopped, foreign investments will start coming in. I would welcome them. They would mean plants in our country, they would mean jobs for our people.

We all are now nothing but cosmic dust when facing the state machinery. It is operated by just a few tens of thousands of people. We may beat our heads against the wall, we may criticize it — nobody takes the least notice. Therefore, it is necessary to organize a system of self-government and leave to the state only that which it must tackle — defense, security, space, fundamental science, health care, education. That is all, nothing more. The rest — to the regions. They are the ones that are most familiar with their own problems. When the state gives up everything that is outside its competence, it will become the strongest authority which will be respected and needed.

[RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA] The team problem is one of the most acute problems facing a politician who is striving to become head of state. Which of your associates could be described as members of a "shadow cabinet" and in what capacity?

[Lebed] As I said, we are playing a game without any rules. There is strong-arm pressure exerted on people with whom I work. People ask not to be "spotlighted."

[RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA] What is the likelihood of an alliance between you and Grigoriy Yavlinskiy and Svyatoslav Fedorov? On what conditions? And what role do you envisage for yourself in it?

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[Lebed] All this talk has started because these politicians are neither Communists nor democrats, neither left- nor right-wingers. Consultations are now in progress. No negotiations yet, just consultations. These consultations have yielded two joint documents. The consultations have been suspended now because all have crossed the 1-million signatures barrier. There is a passionate desire to fundamentally change the situation in the country. Once the registration is over, the consultations will resume and everyone's place will be defined. A pyramid can be properly built only when there is just one person on top. If it is topped by a bundle of twigs, the pyramid would look odd.

[RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA] But there is only a little time left to reach mutual understanding, is that not so?

[Lebed] Given certain circumstances, mutual understanding can be reached in just five minutes.

[RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA] Your appraisal of the Russian-Belarusian treaty?

[Lebed] As an individual and a citizen of Russia, I am in favor of integration. But as a legislator I cannot understand what has happened. We have the CIS. I have always dubbed it the "collection of irregular states." Now, some sort of quartet has been formed within the framework of this CIS, or above it, or beside it — I do not know which. A duo has emerged from this quartet. It is impossible to comprehend how this fits in with the Russian Constitution or the Belarusian Constitution. What kind of Interstate Council is this, and what are our mutual relations with its first Chairman Lukashenka? I am a Russian legislator, he is the Belarusian president — how do we deal with each other? In other words, we have once again a roof being erected in a vacuum, with nothing beneath it. This is no way to build a state. Let alone an interstate...I do not know how to describe it. After all, the presidents themselves got confused. One of them was talking about the Union of Sovereign Republics, the other about the Union of Sovereign States.

[RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA] People abroad feel that, in this instance, Russia has swallowed Belarus. Is this not a revival of Russian imperialism?

[Lebed] The age of empires has passed. They have all collapsed. No attempt to revive them is being made anywhere in the world. Not even by our universally acknowledged hegemon — the United States. It would appear to have full grounds for expansion. But there is no expansion in sight. The time of sovereign states has arrived. This is how it should be: We respect your sovereignty, Ukrainian sovereignty for example. But let us think: There are 12 million Russians living in Ukraine, with 6 million Ukrainians living in Russia. In other words, in the event of abnormal relations, this entire section of the population feels totally out of place.

Let us recall that the Germans have fought the French twice in this century alone. Now it takes only 10 minutes to cross the French-German border. And these are former enemies. How about us? We stem from the same roots. We are brothers. We share the same faith, our language is, to all intents and purposes, the same. We are heirs to the same combat glory. But what are we doing? This is why it is necessary to think and ensure that people on both sides of the border live a comfortable and civilized life.

[RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA] In other words, any closer ties between Russia and Belarus should not give any grounds for fear by the world public?

[Lebed] Not in the least. Two fraternal peoples have taken the first timid steps toward one another. Two parts of the same people intend to reunite. Nobody had any fears when the two parts of Germany were reunited. On the contrary, everyone welcomed this.

[RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA] But the two parts of Germany became one Germany....

[Lebed] Everyone is born different, and everyone dies different. Let us focus attention on people's comfortable lives. This must be the main objective of all politicians.

[RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA] The mass media are now covering Boris Yeltsin's activity much more extensively than that of all the other politicians. How would you comment on this? Do you not feel some sort of discrimination?

[Lebed] No discrimination at all. This may shock the civilized Japanese people. But not us. The law is a jungle, and the bear is king there. Everything is normal.

[RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA] Are there any specific instances of discrimination against you?

[Lebed] Not so far. I do not think there will be any, either. I assume that if I were to travel somewhere I would be offered airtime or newspaper coverage, but this will cost a lot. I have no funds to spend. But this is not discrimination.

[RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA] Your wife recently appeared on the television screen. Does she play a part in your election campaign?

[Lebed] No, I need a wife, not a Raisa Maksimovna [Gorbacheva]. My wife is not a politician. She is the mother of three children and already the grandmother of three grandchildren. She has been and still is performing her main mission on this earth perfectly well.

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[RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA] What do you think, did the television interview with your wife gain any points for you?

[Lebed] It probably did. It is always a pleasure to see a living person rather than some dummy using nothing but cliches.

[RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA] If Yeltsin and Zyuganov were to go into the second round of the election, which one of the two would you prefer?

[Lebed] I am fed up with answering this question. First, I think that this will not happen, even though I may be wrong. Second, I am used to making decisions according to circumstances. By dint of several reasons, the situation will have to seriously change by early June, and this will make it impossible for both Yeltsin and Zyuganov to go into the second round.

Things are far from brilliant in the communist camp today (I am not an anti-Communist, I was a Communist Party member for 19 years, I have simply lost faith). There are no ideas. It would be terrible to lose, this is a matter of prestige, but it would be even more terrible to win.

The incumbent authorities have ground to a halt and are marking time. As for the Communists, all they are offering is to swing around and turn backwards. But it is necessary to move forward.

[RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA] What are your grounds for assuming that the situation will change by early June?

[Lebed] Computations. I would suggest you take a piece of paper and a pencil and work out your own.

[RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA] So, you have no desire to help us in our computations?

[Lebed] No, I don't.

[RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA] And what will happen if Yeltsin does not make it to the second round?

[Lebed] Boris Nikolayevich has a mass of problems. There is a large number of people who want to ask the incumbent president about the disintegration of the country, the collapse of the economy, the unbridled privatization, the shoot-out in 1993, Chechnya.... This is why, when Yeltsin asks himself: Can I relinquish power?, he replies: No! This is why I personally advocate that that the president should be given publicly, at Federation Council and State Duma level, guarantees as regards his actions as president. Guarantees of immunity. You can feel whatever you like about Yeltsin the man, but it is necessary to bear in mind that he is the president.

Russia: Electoral Commission Limits Candidates' Campaign Scope

MK2504072696 Moscow SEGODNYA in Russian 24 Apr 96 p 2

[Report by Gleb Cherkasov: "TsIK Limits Volume of Preelection Agitation"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The stage of registering presidential candidates is gradually drawing to a close. Eight contestants have been officially registered, three have been rejected, and the political future of another six aspirants is to be decided soon: on 26 April. A second stage of the election race will in fact open one week from now, where the contestants and their supporters will be campaigning for votes.

Unlike the parliamentary election campaign, there will not be much election agitation in the media this time around. According to the instruction "On the Procedure of Provision of Air Time on the Channels of State Television and Radio Companies to Presidential Candidates, Electoral Associations, and Voter Pressure Groups and the Publication of Campaign Materials in Periodicals," passed by the Central Electoral Commission [TsIK] early in April, free air time will be available between 14 May and 14 June, 20 minutes daily on each federal television channel and 10 minutes on regional channels [for each candidate]. A candidate is entitled to buying air time but not in excess of the length of the free air time. The instruction bans interruption of candidates' appearances by the inclusion of their rivals' advertising. As for political advertising, it cannot exceed 10 percent of a candidate's air time granted free or bought. No political ads can be included in commercials on news programs or in other commercial spots.

As for periodicals, this time around, the TsIK has decided to exempt state-run media from the publication of campaign material free of charge. All [campaign] material can be published in the press exclusively for payment between 29 April and 14 June. "Campaign material cannot be longer that 10 percent of the total single print of a publication."

The instruction specifies that "officials on state or municipal service and registered as presidential candidates are not supposed to take advantage of their office to curtail the rights of the other candidates to media access or to use [their] official addresses, press conferences, or interviews for their own promotion as candidates or for criticizing the election platforms of their rivals."

These curbs on the use of the electronic and printed media for campaigning purposes will inevitably compel the presidential candidates and their teams to use "street" agitation means: leaflets, posters, and verbal agitation.

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Gennadiy Zyuganov's supporters seem to have so far been unrivaled in this department. At the time of the Duma elections, the Communists deftly combined campaigning in the media with speaking directly with the voters. Boris Yeltsin's supporters, to compete in a worthy manner against the Zyuganovites, will have to go back to their own experience of the early 1990's. Far from all of the president's supporters, however, have sufficient skill to organize "street" work with the voters. As for printed matter, according to information of your SEGODNYA correspondent, not a single leaflet has been ready for printing in large quantities.

Russia: Voting Procedure Intended To Preclude Ballot-Rigging

MM2404125296 Moscow ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI ("Political Wednesday" section) in Russian 24 Apr 96 p iii

[INTERFAX report: "Preventing Ballot Rigging"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Central Electoral Commission is adopting additional measures to preclude any possibility of distortions of the Russian Federation presidential election results, Aleksandr Veshnyakov, secretary of the Central Electoral Commission, has told INTERFAX. He said that the Central Electoral Commission has adopted a decree on the standard procedure for working out the results of the vote which provides for complete openness in the vote-counting process.

A. Veshnyakov stressed that the votes will be counted non-stop 16 June until the results are obtained: Electoral commission members, both voting and non-voting, and observers, including international journalists, who have the right to attend the counting, must be notified of the results. The Central Electoral Commission secretary noted that an enlarged copy of the protocol must be displayed for public scrutiny in the building where the votes are to be counted. A. Veshnyakov stressed that no amendments are allowed to the voting protocol. He said that the top copy of an electoral commission's protocol is sent immediately to the superior commission, the second copy is to be stored at the commission, and the third copy is to be made available to any citizen of the Russian Federation for scrutiny.

The Central Electoral Commission secretary noted that an observer may insist that an electoral commission provide a certified copy of the voting results. A. Veshnyakov noted that the use of the Vybory State Automated System during the election campaign is designed to ensure public monitoring of the vote counting. At the same time he stressed that figures indicating the progress and results of the voting obtained via the automated system are preliminary and have no legal significance.

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CIS: ITAR-TASS Carries Press Review for 25 Apr

LD2504064396 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0615 GMT 25 Apr 96

["Press Review" — ITAR-TASS headline]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW April 25 (ITAR-TASS) — Follows a review of Thursday's Moscow-based Russian newspapers dated April 25. Russian President Boris Yeltsin's visit to Khabarovsk and China and the supposed death of Dzhokhar Dudayev are the main topics.

IZVESTIYA on reports about Dudayev's death.

The newspaper examines some versions of what happened. According to information received from close friends in Moscow, the Dudayev men's satellite communications station is located in the area of Gekhi-Chu village. The President of Ichkeria used to regularly visit the station for important telephone conversation.

According to unconfirmed data, this time it was a question of telephone talks with representatives of King Hassan II of Morocco, who was mentioned by Dudayev himself as a possible candidate for a go-between at talks with the Kremlin. It was during such a visit that Dudayev got caught in a missile-and-bombing strike.

IZVESTIYA on Aleksandr Lebed's negative attitude to latter-day Communist Party bureaucrats.

The newspaper carries an article headlined "The New Reds" by General Aleksandr Lebed, candidate for the presidency of Russia, who expresses his negative attitude to the latter-day bureaucrats of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation and to their true ambitions in the struggle for power.

ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA opens up with an article about Boris Yeltsin's visit in Khabarovsk Territory and China and a version about Dzhokhar Dudayev's death.

ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA on the spring session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE).

A spring session of the PACE has opened in Strasbourg Palace, with Russia participating in it for the first time as a full member.

On the eve of departure for Strasbourg, State Duma Speaker Gennadiy Seleznev, the leader of the Russian delegation to the session, gave an interview to the newspaper.

Seleznev is to address the PACE session, since there has been no Russia's report there following Russia's accession to the CE. Out of the total number of delegation members, 36 people represent the Federal Assembly and 24 represent the State Duma. All leaders of parliamentary factions have left for Strasbourg to attend the session.

ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA on Kalmyk President Kirsan Ilyumzhinov's activities.

President Ilyumzhinov visited the editorial office of the newspaper. An account of the meeting with him is published under the headline "I proclaimed a dictatorship". Citing successes of his activities, Ilyumzhinov mentioned such moves as action to curb crime, to establish a leather-processing industry in the republic, to develop the power sector, and streamline bureaucracy.

The President of Kalmykia takes measures to establish a modern infrastructure in the republic, which will make it possible to attract tourists from all over the world to Elista.

Interest in Ilyumzhinov's undertakings is great already now. The Pope has presented a library to the capital of Kalmykia. Saddam Husayn is to build an Iraqi cultural centre there while prominent American Chess Grandmaster Bobby Fischer is to arrive in Kalmykia in May and build a house in Elista.

ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI on prospects for Boris Yeltsin's win in presidential elections.

The newspaper carries a summary of remarks by Aleksandr Livshits, Assistant to the Russian President on Economic Affairs, under the headline "Boris Yeltsin's electoral win would signify a great stride forward".

The Presidential Aide pointed out that "at stake is a continuation of reforms and the future of achievements, which give Russia a chance for a civilised future. There difference between the programmes of Yeltsin and (Gennadiy) Zyuganov is that between certitude and uncertainty, between responsibility and irresponsibility".

Facts given by Livshits unambiguously indicate that the situation in the run-up to the elections bears rather heavily on the economy and on the reform process. But, at the same time, Yeltsin's electoral win would immediately open the flood-gates. That would be a great stride forward, Livshits said.

KRASNAYA ZVEZDA on Yeltsin's visit to China.

The newspaper frontpages an article about Boris Yeltsin's arrival in China for an official visit.

"Judging from the programme of the visit, the coming days will be exceptionally busy for the Russian Head of State," the newspaper observes.

KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA runs an article headlined "Dudayev is most likely dead, rather than alive".

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TRUD frontpages an article about the death of Dzhokhar Dudayev. "A report to this effect was from only one source — Khozh-Akhmed Yarikhanov — a person who is known to the Federal authorities well enough, for last summer he headed the Dudayev delegation at the talks with Moscow."

PRAVDA runs an article about the 10th anniversary of the Chernobyl tragedy.

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Russia: Yeltsin Welcomed in China With 21-Gun Salute

LD2404123996 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1220 GMT 24 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] BEIJING, April 24 (Itar-Tass) — Twenty-one gun salute welcomed Russian President Boris Yeltsin in Beijing's central Tiananmen square on Wednesday. The Russian leader arrived in China for a three-day official visit.

A guard of honour was placed at the main entrance to the House of People's Assemblies for the meeting ceremony staged by Chinese President Jiang Zemin. The military orchestra played the national anthems of the two countries. A dinner was given in honour of the Russian President.

On Thursday, Yeltsin is to have talks with Jiang Zemin and meet other Chinese leaders. Fourteen bilateral documents will be signed.

On Friday, Yeltsin is scheduled to arrive in Shanghai, where the Russian and Chinese leaders together with heads of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan will sign an agreement to promote trust on the former Sino-Soviet border.

The Russian president is accompanied by First Deputy Prime-Minister Oleg Soskovets, Foreign Trade Minister Oleg Davydov, Foreign Minister Yevgeniy Primakov, Defence Minister Pavel Grachev, Atomic Power Minister Yuriy Shafranik, as well as heads of regions, territories and large enterprises.

Russia: Jiang Zemin Greets Yeltsin in Beijing

LD2404132196 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1306 GMT 24 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] BEIJING, April 24 (Itar-Tass) — "A warm spring has set in Beijing, and although it was windy yesterday, the day is clear and fine today, which is a good sign for a visit to our country by the friend of the Chinese people, Russian President Boris Yeltsin," said Chinese chairman Jiang Zemin, beginning talks with visiting President Boris Yeltsin staying in China on an official visit.

The talks began after an official ceremony of welcoming the Russian President in the building of the People's Assembly in Tiananmen square.

The Chinese chairman approved the Russian president's intention to visit Shanghai, a city where Zemin had studied and worked for many years. The Chinese chairman stressed that it is in Shanghai that an agreement on measures of confidence in the military field in the border area — the first such document in the Asian-Pacific region, was planned to be signed by representatives of five countries.

"Although Shanghai is located south of the capital, air temperatures there are the same as in Beijing, but I think the most important thing is that the people in Shanghai will give no less cordial welcome than in Beijing," Zemin said.

Yeltsin thanked the Chinese chairman for his invitation to visit China. "I remember recommendations you gave me last time — to see as much territory during the visit as possible, and I shall fly to Shanghai as you have recommended," Yeltsin said, adding that he was glad to be among friends. The President stressed that "both sides had made fruitful preparations for the visit."

Russia: Yeltsin Says China Backs Nuclear Test Ban Idea

LD2504055296 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0548 GMT 25 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] BEIJING April 25 (Itar-Tass) — President Boris Yeltsin said China had agreed to join the comprehensive nuclear test ban proposed by eight leading world powers at a recent summit in Moscow.

"We have agreed that the Chinese side will join the decision of the 'eight' on nuclear security, which was passed in Moscow, to hold negotiations this year and sign a treaty on a complete ban of nuclear tests", Yeltsin told reporters on Thursday.

Russia: Yeltsin Says No Disputed Issues Between Russia, China

LD2504060196 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0350 GMT 25 Apr 96

[By ITAR-TASS special correspondent]

[FBIS Translated Text] Beijing, 25 Apr — "The package of 14 agreements to be signed today will give a powerful impulse to the development of bilateral relations," Boris Yeltsin said at the Russian-Chinese talks being held in Beijing with a large number people taking part. These talks were preceded by talks between the Russian president and PRC Chairman Jiang Zemin with just a few people attending.

Boris Yeltsin said that an accord has been reached on setting a committee on friendship, cooperation, and development. Russia and China have also agreed to set up a commission at prime minister level which will meet twice a year, once in China, once in Russia.

During the talks that have taken place, the president stressed that we have progressed considerably compared

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with the accords reached in 1992. "In the new declaration, it has been registered that a partnership based on equal rights and trust aimed at cooperation in the 21st century has been registered between Russia and China." "This is a completely new element," the head of the Russian state stressed.

He noted with satisfaction that "in dealing with bilateral and international issues, our points of view coincide. There are no disputed issues between us, and, as the president, I am very glad about that".

Russia: Yeltsin: China Backs Russian Opposition to NATO Expansion

LD2504104596 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1000 GMT 25 Apr 96

[From the "Vesti" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Russian President Boris Yeltsin made two important statements on military issues in Beijing today. [passage omitted]

[Begin Yeltsin recording] As regards the expansion of NATO, Chairman Jiang Zemin has categorically supported Russia's view that NATO's eastward expansion toward Russia's borders is impermissible. [end recording]

Russia: PRC's Jiang Zemin Calls Yeltsin Visit 'Complete Success'

LD2504085196 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0753 GMT 25 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] BEIJING April 25 (Itar-Tass) — "It can be said already now that the current visit of President Boris Yeltsin to China has been crowned with complete success. The visit will have a far-reaching effect on the building of bilateral relations of constructive partnership oriented towards the 21st century," President Jiang Zemin told journalists on Thursday at the close of the Sino-Russian talks and the signing of a package of agreements.

The signing of the documents of great importance is an illustration that bilateral relations have reached a new stage of all-round development, the Chinese leader said.

China and Russia are neighbouring countries. Therefore, efforts to promote mutual trust and maintain the stability of the development of contacts accord with the vital interests of the two peoples, who "strive to be good friends, good partners and good neighbours for each other", the Chinese President emphasised.

Wide prospects for the expansion of bilateral cooperation have also been accounted for by great industrial potentials of China and Russia and by the fact that in-depth economic reforms are being effected in the two countries, Jiang pointed out.

Russia: Yeltsin Describes Talks With Chinese Leaders

LD2504090396 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 0700 GMT 25 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] This morning the Russian president laid a wreath at the Memorial to the People's Heroes on Tiananmen Square. After that the Russo-Chinese summit talks started. A large package of joint documents was signed as a result of these talks.

Talking to journalists after the signing ceremony, PRC Chairman Jiang Zemin highly praised the present state of Russo-Chinese relations and said he is confident that they will continue to develop fruitfully. He said the Russian president's visit has been a complete success.

And this is what the Russian president Boris Yeltsin said to journalists:

[Begin Yeltsin recording] We discussed with Chairman Jiang Zemin a wide range of questions concerning the further development and intensification of bilateral relations and cooperation in international affairs during the reforms in our two countries. The main result is that a decision was reached to vigorously accelerate the Russo-Chinese partnership on all fronts. If today the total trade turnover amounts to $5.5 billion, we must raise it to $20 billion a year.

Russo-Chinese relations are capable of withstanding any changes, and they have worked with maximum efficiency for the benefit of the people of both countries, in the interests of maintaining international peace and stability.

All in all, 15 documents have been signed, including the main one, which is the joint Russo-Chinese declaration. At the beginning of the declaration it is written straightforwardly and clearly that our relations are a strategic partnership of equality determining relations in the next millennium.

We have agreed that the Chinese side will join the decision of the G-8 summit that took place in Moscow to hold talks this year and sign an agreement on the complete cessation of nuclear testing.

In Shanghai there will be another big event involving the presidents of Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan and the chairman of the People's Republic of China — an agreement will be signed on strengthening confidence in the military sphere along the whole of our border. [end recording]

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[Announcer] According to the schedule of the visit, the Russian president will meet today with National People's Congress Chairman Qiao Shi, State Council Premier Li Peng, and members of the public.

Aleksey Zagotkin, Radio Russia news service, Beijing.

Russia: Deputy Foreign Minister Addresses Concerns on PRC Border

LD2404153796 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 1320 GMT 24 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The attention of the mass media is drawn today to President Yeltsin's visit to China. One of the problems being widely discussed in connection with this, especially in the Russian Far East, is the demarcation of the Russian-Chinese border. To recall: in accordance with an agreement, demarcation has taken place along virtually the whole border, all 4,000 or so km, and sections totalling about 19 km have yet to undergo demarcation. This is because of protests by the local population. I would like to offer you an excerpt from remarks made by Deputy Internal Affairs Minister Aleksandr Panov at a news conference prior to the visit:

[Begin Panov recording] People keep saying we are giving away territory on which there are graves of Russian soldiers. Nothing of the sort. In 1993, and the local administration knows this perfectly well, this issue was settled and the Chinese side said that it has no claims on the areas on which there are Russian graves. Incidentally, one could wish that this touching concern for graves might eventually result in their being made to look decent. Nevertheless, this same point keeps being bandied about — namely, that some graves are being given away.

The second myth is an economic one: that there is a marvellous cedar copse on one of the sections and that we cannot possibly live without these cedar cones. The map published by Maritime Territory indicates there are firs and birches there rather than cedars; and people who have been there know this is true.

The third myth is more significant — namely, about the strategic importance of the section on the River Tumannaya — that if we now adjust the border here, China will gain an exit to the sea and the consequences will simply be endless. This is not true. The estuary of the Tumannaya River — this is 17 km beyond this section of the border with China — belongs to Russia. This is where the border between Russia and the DPRK runs, so China is not getting any exit to the sea. Some people say that then China will build an enormous port there, freight will start to move, the Trans-Siberian Railway will die, and so on and so forth. For those who do not know, the Tumannaya River is shallow, small boats have difficulty sailing along it, let alone vessels and ships.

When we cite this argument, some people in the Far East say: Well, the Chinese will widen the channel and the Chinese simply cannot wait to get their hands on this section and start polluting it. So far, we are the ones doing the polluting. The Chinese are being quite careful here. Furthermore, if they wanted to engage in polluting, there are masses of opportunities for this. I would like to point out that it is not only the Tumannaya River where we have a common border with China. We share Lake Khanka with China, which conducts economic activity on the border of this lake. The River Razdolnaya has its source in China, and so does the Sungari River. So, all this could be polluted if the desire were there. But this is all very hard to imagine, all the more so since we have an agreement with China on joint ecological activity and protection of the environment, and all these issues are being tackled. Moreover, a special ecological examination was undertaken by the appropriate departments, and this confirmed that there is nothing threatening to the environment there and everything can quite easily be settled jointly. [end recording]

Russia: Nuclear Power Minister Praises Accord With PRC

LD2604080596 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0745 GMT 25 Apr 96

[By Andrey Shtorkh]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] BEIJING April 25 (Itar-Tass) — An Intergovernmental Agreement on Cooperation in the Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy, signed here on Thursday, has furnished a legal basis for Russo-Chinese joint projects, Viktor Mikhaylov, Russian Minister of Nuclear Power, has told Itar-Tass.

Until now, cooperation in this respect practically lacked a legal basis, Mikhaylov said. Due to the Agreement signed, about 30 areas of bilateral cooperation will be provided with a basis to tackle a wide range of matters, including the use of dual-use technology and the ensurance of guarantees of the non-use of Russian technologies by China in its military-and-technical research and development efforts, he said.

Mikhaylov recalled that documents on the construction of a nuclear power station in the Chinese province of Liaoning and a plant to enrich uranium for use as fuel at nuclear power stations had been signed in 1992 during Boris Yeltsin's first visit to China. The Minister's opinion is that the projects are being implemented slower than expected. Nevertheless, the first section of

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the plant is to be put into operation early in October this year.

Russia grants credits to China to a sum of almost 2,500 million dollars, Mikhaylov said. The credits are provided only for work to be done by Russia. This applies to both equipment and specialists who work here.

As a priority in cooperation in the nuclear power industry, Viktor Mikhaylov also mentioned cooperation connected with the conversion of nuclear weapons for civilian uses. In China, this problem is handled by the Academy of Engineering Physics. Together with the Academy, the Russian Ministry of Nuclear Power has established an enterprise in the Senren Special Economic Zone. As a result of defence-industry conversion development efforts, "we supply fuel to a Franco-Chinese nuclear power station in the area of Senren," Mikhaylov pointed out.

Russia: Relations With PRC To Reach 'New Heights'

MM2504084096 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 25 Apr 96 p 1

[Article by Vladimir Kuzar: "Russia-China: Partnership Geared to 21st Century"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Russian President Boris Yeltsin has arrived in Beijing on an official visit. The program indicates that the next few days will be extremely intensive for the Russian head of state. Boris Yeltsin has around 10 hours of talks ahead with China's top leadership. He will meet with PRC President Jiang Zemin; Qiao Shi, chairman of the Chinese National People's Congress Standing Committee; and State Council Premier Li Peng. In addition the Russian president will meet with representatives of business circles and the public.

Press reports indicate that people in China attach particular importance to this visit. And that is no coincidence. Since the dozen documents scheduled for signing include a Political Declaration on the Basic Principles of Sino-Russian Relations and a major package of documents on trade and economic cooperation. And, last, unprecedented security agreements.

That is why the two states' official representatives believe that this visit will make it possible to raise Sino-Russian relations to new heights. And it has proved possible to create a solid foundation for this over the last three years. "Our relations," the Russian president stressed during an interview with China's XINHUA the day before his departure, "have been raised to a fundamentally new level of mutual understanding, trust, and cooperation. There is now every reason for describing them as a constructive partnership geared to the 21st century. The new quality of relations between the two major neighboring powers helps to perform the tasks of internal development in Russia and China, strengthens their international positions, and constitutes an important factor for peace and security throughout the world."

What is more, according to the Russian leader, it is evenhanded, mutually beneficial Sino-Russian relations, free from opportunism, that are the most striking embodiment of the model of interstate relations in the post-confrontational era. It is extremely noteworthy that a unique document for Asia will be signed during Boris Yeltsin's visit to China — a Treaty on Military Confidence-Building Measures in the Border Area. This will be done in Shanghai by the leaders of five states, namely Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and China. The treaty will be the first document of its kind in Asia and will help to increase confidence and stability not only between these countries but also in the region as a whole.

As we know, Russia is insistently pursuing the policy of creating a security system in the Asia-Pacific region. During last May's visit to China by Army General Pavel Grachev, Russian defense minister, the Russian delegation proposed creating a subregional system of collective security in Northeast Asia involving six states — Russia, China, the United States, Japan, and North and South Korea. It is not ruled out that Russian President Boris Yeltsin will submit a number of initiatives in this sphere.

Military and military-technical cooperation between the two countries should be seen from this viewpoint, that of strengthening the security of all states in the Asia-Pacific Region. Exchanges of visits, delegations, and groups of specialists, consultations involving the leaders of the Russian and Chinese Defense Ministries, and the coordination of actions in border districts, in particular the Far Eastern and Shenyang Military Districts, are taking place on a regular basis. As for military-technical cooperation, China is interested in buying Russian combat equipment and arms. And Russia is very keen on this since arms sales enable it to keep defense enterprises afloat, retain science and production cadres, and improve technology.

Sometimes the development of Sino-Russian military and military-technical ties is interpreted as an a attempt to create some kind of military alliance. However, that is a false premise. Sino-Russian relations are not aimed against third countries and extensive contacts between

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the military departments have always helped to increase trust between peoples.

What is more, contacts in such an important sphere as the military sphere help to create a special atmosphere of trust in relations between the two states. And that is extremely important since both Moscow and Beijing are currently the center of world politics. This time the Russian head of state is to carry out the "G-8's" instructions and brief the Chinese leadership on the decisions adopted at the Moscow summit. The problem of nuclear tests is of particular interest here. As we know, the "G-8" intend to try to adopt a comprehensive nuclear test ban treaty. But China has its own views on this matter. The results of the talks will reveal whether Boris Yeltsin manages to persuade the Chinese leadership. It is extremely significant that the documents ready for signing include a document on cooperation in the sphere of nuclear safety.

Sino-Russian trade and economic ties are also extremely important. Commodity turnover between our countries has reached a significant level over the last few years (around $8 billion). Admittedly, it fell somewhat in 1995 since the imperfect trade mechanism took its toll. Nevertheless its structure is still largely favorable for Russia. Machinery and equipment represent 30- 40 percent of the Russian Federation's exports. Consumer goods and foods predominate among imports from the PRC.

Of late you may have encountered reproaches in the Russian mass media regarding the quality of Chinese consumer goods. It seems that the emergence on the Chinese market of major Russian producers and foreign trade organizations, along with the introduction of stricter supervisory measures (it is intended to sign documents on this in Beijing), would considerably improve the state of affairs here. Especially since considerable potential interest in investment in Russia and in enlisting Russian enterprise capital in the PRC in the form of advanced technologies, primarily from sectors of industry undergoing conversion, can be observed in China.

As we can see, Sino-Russian relations have very wide-ranging potential in all spheres of cooperation. It is the task of the two great powers' leaders to make this potential a reality.

Russia: PRC Attitudes, Hopes on Russia Detailed

MM2404134896 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 20 Apr 96 p 3

[Feature by Pavel Gurin and Igor Kurashov under the rubric "On the Eve of President Boris Yeltsin's Visit to China:" "Neighbor Talks to Neighbor.... China Is Not Hiding From Changes. It Is Meeting Them Head On"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] ... Beijing-Moscow — When everything had been said and the farewell toasts had been made, one of us proposed "one for the road" according to the Russian custom. Our colleague from RENMIN RIBAO immediately proposed a toast of his own.

"To Boris Yeltsin's victory," he proposed.

We willingly supported him. But what sort of "one for the road" was that?

"Does that mean you want a communist to be beaten?" — we put the question bluntly with no particular diplomacy.

"We want Yeltsin to win," our Chinese colleague repeated. "We are interested in stable, long-term relations with Russia. Yeltsin will guarantee these relations without any loss of tempo."

Whereupon we parted, promising to convey to the Russian public at large this desire of our Eastern neighbors, albeit expressed unofficially. Especially as we too are interested in such long-term stabilization in the most direct way.

During his visit to the ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA editorial office last December Li Fenglin, PRC ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary to Russia, proposed that we restore ties between leading Chinese and Russian newspapers which have been severed in recent years.

"You would not be averse to establishing relations of cooperation with RENMIN RIBAO?" the ambassador proposed.

We thanked him. Li Fenglin immediately got down to business and just one month later ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA received from RENMIN RIBAO an invitation to exchange official delegations.

...And so, having completed our familiarization with our hosts and with China, we are heading home.

Nobody has ever returned from a trip to China without impressions. We visited Beijing, Shanghai, and Shenzhen and met with a member of the party's highest leadership, high-ranking officials of the State Commission for Economic Reform and the PRC Foreign Ministry, leaders of joint-stock companies, free economic zone city councils, trade and industrial centers, and specialized groups, and central and regional newspaper journalists.

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We decided that the Russian reader would obtain the best sum of information about China from a generalized dialogue with the people we spoke to.

China Awaits Yeltsin

ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA question. In Russia it is known that President Boris Yeltsin is meticulously preparing for his visit to China. The historically and traditionally friendly relations between our countries and peoples need new substance and prospects. Evidently the Chinese side is also interested in the success of this visit. What would you like to say on this subject?

Answer. After the establishment of state relations between China and Russia in December 1991 mutual relations between the two countries developed healthily and successfully. Our cooperation in the political, trade and economic, scientific and technical, cultural, and other spheres is being continuously expanded and strengthened. Private reciprocal visits and contacts between the two countries' leaders are giving a powerful impetus to the process of establishing and developing long-term and stable relations of friendship, good-neighborliness, and mutually advantageous cooperation between China and Russia. In the last few years the two countries' heads of state and government and foreign ministers have exchanged visits.

We are now awaiting President B. Yeltsin's visit to our country. Without doubt the visit will be important and substantive. The two countries' leaders will have a comprehensive and in-depth exchange of opinions on bilateral relations and the most important international questions of mutual interest. We expect that a number of documents developing and strengthening our cooperation will be signed.

This visit is of great significance for the enrichment and development of the constructive partnership relations between China and Russia being carried forward into the 21st century.

An agreement with the heads of certain other states on military confidence building in the border area will also be signed. It is the first military-political document of this kind in the Asia-Pacific Region, which is of great importance to the construction of a border of eternal peace between the two countries. It will have a wide-ranging and profound effect on the establishment of an atmosphere of peace and stability not only in the Asia-Pacific Region but also throughout the world. We [illegible] sure that the visit will be a complete success.

Clouds Looming on Border?

Question. It is known that China has territorial and border problems, which in certain international circles are giving rise to both concern and a certain amount of speculation. Within Russia too there are political forces which are trying to frighten the people with the "threat from the East" and initiating "debates" and "hearings" on military-technical cooperation between our countries. How does the Chinese leadership intend to solve these problems, especially the border and territorial ones?

Answer. The People's Republic of China is pursuing a good- neighbor and friendly foreign policy. For a long time China has been devoting its energies to the development of peaceful and friendly relations with contiguous countries. China's consistent position on history's remaining border questions has been to resolve border questions with the relevant contiguous countries fairly and rationally on the basis of the five principles of peaceful coexistence, according to the norms of international law, and by means of peace talks, and not by resorting to force. Being guided by this spirit, China has already successfully resolved border questions with most contiguous countries and is now holding talks with certain neighbors on border sections which have not yet been defined or is doing preparatory work for demarcation. This shows the Chinese Government's sincerity and resolve to remove "border questions" from the agenda. We will continue to make every effort to build peace and stability with our neighbors in our region.

Here it must be borne in mind that China and Russia have a common border over 4,300 km long. We have inherited border questions from history. We can solve them only by peaceful means, based on the traditional friendship between our two peoples and the interests of establishing long-term, stable relations between our states. And, of course, being guided by the principles of international law.

The Chinese Government held and is holding talks on border questions with the USSR and Russian Governments. As a result of decades of difficult talks the sides have removed almost all disputed aspects, and in May 1991 and September 1994 respectively they signed agreements on the eastern and western parts of the Chinese-Russian state border. These two agreements have already come into force after their ratification in the two countries' supreme legislative organs. Currently our specialists are continuing talks on questions regarding the ownership of certain disputed border sections.

Over three years have passed since we began demarcation work on the eastern part of the Chinese-Russian state border in July 1992. Demarcation work on the border's western part is also in the offing. Although certain results have already been achieved in the eastern sector, not everything is going smoothly. Certain Russian peo-

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ple are continually delivering statements which do not facilitate demarcation work and which even hinder the normal implementation of this work.

We have drawn attention to the fact that the Russian Government has repeatedly advocated that demarcation work be completed within the set deadline in strict accordance with Chinese-Russian border agreements.

Recently President B. Yeltsin signed a directive confirming the position of strictly observing the Chinese-Russian border agreement on the border's eastern part. We rate this highly. We hope that our combined efforts will lead to the speedy completion of the work and that the border between our two countries will be friendly and stable.

We Are Not Threatening Anybody

Question. What about military-technical cooperation?

Answer. This cooperation must also be viewed in the context of our general relations. In recent years they have been developed continuously. Therefore it is normal that they have been expanded in the military sphere too. In particular, fairly good results have been achieved in the conversion sphere. At the end of last year Liu Huaqing, deputy chairman of the PRC Central Military Council, paid a visit to Russia, which facilitated the strengthening of friendship and cooperation between our countries and armies. We are satisfied with the development of Chinese- Russian relations and are ready to go further.

China — a developing state — is pursuing a peaceful policy and never threatens other countries. Even when China becomes powerful we will not resort to hegemonism and a policy of force. Like every state we are trying to strengthen our defense capability, are purchasing defensive weapons from other countries, including Russia, and are developing sensible military-technical cooperation. This conforms to standard international practice. As everybody knows, the Chinese Government steadfastly supports this policy, namely: Military-technical cooperation with other countries is not directed against any third parties and does not threaten other countries and regions. This policy of China's will not change.

The rapprochement between China and Russia and the development between them of relations of good-neighborliness, friendship, and mutually advantageous cooperation will not threaten Southeast Asia but on the contrary will facilitate the preservation of peace and stability not only in Asia but also throughout the world.

China knows about the comments by certain people in Russia regarding the so-called "threat from the East." They are groundless. These statements are at odds with reality and are harming the healthy development of relations between the two countries.

But it should come as no surprise that discordant voices of one kind or another can be heard during the development of Chinese-Russian relations. The establishment of long-term and stable relations of good-neighborliness, friendship, and mutually advantageous cooperation between China and Russia is the correct choice of the two countries' leaders and peoples, is in their fundamental common interests, and facilitates peace and stability throughout the world. Such relations can in no way not be developed just because some people do not like them.

Question. There are also thorny problems between us which require their own solutions: smuggling, the increasing penetration of Russian territory by criminal structures, which complicates an already crime-prone situation, the failure of whole groups which have arrived in Russia as tourists to return.... In your opinion what measures must we adopt through common efforts?

Answer. China and Russia are neighbors. As relations of good- neighborliness and friendship between our two countries develop dynamically cooperation in various spheres is being continuously expanded, which generates certain new phenomena and problems during exchanges between the two countries' citizens. For example, in Russia there are occasional crimes against Chinese citizens, which causes great material loss to Chinese citizens and corporate entities located on Russian territory. Frankly, in the vast majority of cases it is the handiwork of Russian citizens. It cannot be denied that there are also criminals among the Chinese people living in Russia. Although they are very few, they cannot be ignored. We believe that all criminals, both Russian and Chinese, must be punished according to law.

We are always educating Chinese citizens in the spirit of observing Russian laws. We also hope that the Russian side will take effective measures to guarantee the legal rights, interests, and physical security of the Chinese citizens living in Russia. For our part we will take appropriate measures to guarantee the legal rights, interests, and physical security of the Russian citizens living in China.

The relevant Chinese and Russian organs have made great efforts to combat criminals, and good results have been achieved. Chinese law enforcement organs are ready to continue cooperation with the Russian side, especially with Russian police agencies, with the aim of strengthening the exchange of information, improving both countries' administrative regimes, and eliminating

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deficiencies in the joint struggle against various types of lawbreaking and criminal activity.

It must be noted that in the last two years exchanges between the two countries' citizens have in the main gone well and that some problems were solved in a timely manner. Now there is no problem regarding an intensification of the penetration of Russia by contraband and criminal organizations. Both Russia and China should not worry about this and should not believe the exaggerated importance of certain cases, as Western mass media are trying to portray it. [passage omitted]

Russia: Russian Su-27 Planes Arrive in China

LD2504102196 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1001 GMT 25 Apr 96

[By Andrey Shtorkh]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] BEIJING April 25 (Itar-Tass) — The first 11 Su-27 Russian fighter planes arrived to China on Wednesday and another 11 are expected on Thursday together with air defence systems, Russian Defence minister Pavel Grachev, who is accompanying President Boris Yeltsin on his Chinese visit, told Tass today.

Grachev said the planes were delivered in the framework of a Russian-Chinese contract and stressed that he was satisfied with the progress of the military cooperation between the two countries.

Grachev said that he and his Chinese counterpart Chi Haotian "agreed to boost the cooperation" during their Thursday meeting, but did not specify any concrete new deals.

Russia: India To Buy SU-30MK Fighter-Bombers; Plane Shown in Flight

MM2504083196 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1130 GMT 15 Apr 96

[From the "Technology News" program: Announcer-read report over video; figures in brackets denote broadcast time in GMT in hours, minutes, and seconds]

[FBIS Translated Text] [113039] [Announcer to camera and over video of two fighter-bombers taking off and in flight] The Government of India has decided to purchase 48 Su-30MK two-seat multi-role long-range fighter-bombers. The decision to purchase the Russian aircraft was adopted by India not only thanks to the long-standing military and technical links between the two countries, but also on the basis of the excellent flight and combat capabilities of the fighter-bombers. The Su-30MK is a frontline strike aircraft but can also be used for air defense purposes. Maximum take-off weight totals 34 tonnes, and armament loading exceeds eight tonnes. Maxmium speed at altitute is 2,500 kph.

Russia: Nuclear Exchange Agreement With Ukraine in Jeopardy

LD2504101896 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0929 GMT 25 Apr 96

[By Veronika Romanenkova]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, April 25 (Itar-Tass) — The fulfilment of an agreement on the delivery of fuel for nuclear power plants (NPPs) from Russia to Ukraine in exchange for nuclear warheads is facing the threat of being upset. "We have not received from the budget so much as a rouble during the first quarter of the current year," a spokesman for the TVEL concern, which coordinates this work, told Tass today. According to a plan, state allocations should have amounted to 250 billion roubles.

In order to produce fuel cassettes for Ukrainian NPPs, TVEL had to take loans. The fuel has been produced now. However, the cassettes will not be delivered to Ukraine, until Russian institutions make all the necessary payments between themselves. So, Ukraine did not receive fuel cassettes for its NPPs in the first several months of 1996.

Nuclear warheads are turned over by Ukraine to Russia under the START-1 treaty. The Russian side should dismantle the warheads and utilize the released nuclear materials. Russian Minister for Atomic Energy Viktor Mikhaylov said on the eve of the Moscow summit on nuclear security, held on April 19-20, that the last stage of this operation — the transportation of nuclear warheads from Ukraine and Belarus and their dismantling — would be completed in 1996.

Russia: Controversy Surrounds Extradition of Aliyev Opponents

MK2504080396 Moscow KOMMERSANT-DAILY in Russian 24 Apr 96 p 4

[Report by Georgiy Bovt and Stanislav Tarasov: "A Painful Issue"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The backstage struggle around the extradition of former President Ayaz Mutalibov to Azerbaijan continues. Mutalibov himself is still in a special hospital. Meanwhile, it is quite clear that the original plan of the Azerbaijani special services, designed to shanghai Mutalibov and ex-Defense Minister Ragim Kaziyev, has failed to come off.

According to some reports, Mutalibov's health condition (he was placed in a special clinic with a diagnosis

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of "heart attack") is improving, and he might be discharged in the next few days. The only question is where to. According to the KHABAR-SERVIS news agency the chances of his extradition to Baku are diminishing. The Russian Prosecutor's Office deemed the Azerbaijani grounds insufficient, whereupon Azerbaijan's Prosecutor's Office supplied Moscow with additional material on Mutalibov, leveling — in addition to political — also criminal charges against the former president.

Following a verbal request from the Azerbaijani General Prosecutor's Office more than a week ago, the Russian police arrested Kaziyev, who was earlier sentenced to death in Azerbaijan for the purportedly deliberate surrender of [the towns of] Shushi and Lachin to Armenia. They also arrested Mutalibov who, back in the days of the Elchibey government, was charged with organizing mass disturbances and coup attempts. Kaziyev was handed over to Azerbaijani special services, who arrived in Moscow on a special flight, almost immediately. The noise in the press and the sustained pressure on the Russian Internal Affairs Ministry (including, according to KOMMERSANT-DAILY sources, on the part of Yeltsin's inner circle), however, put the Mutalibov transfer on hold. The Russian State Duma presumably has not played a small role here either. On 18 April it adopted a statement, "On Responsibility for the Extradition to Other States of Persons Persecuted for Political Convictions," and also a resolution including a recommendation for the general prosecutor to stop such practices. Thereby parliament raised a major problem. On one hand, there is an agreement on legal assistance between Russian and Azerbaijan. It is invoked by both Baku and the Moscow police (the FSB [Federal Security Service], incidentally, has repeatedly refused to take part in hunting Aliyev's ranking opponents). On the other hand, there is the Russian Federation Constitution, Article 63 of which says: "Extradition to other states of persons persecuted for political convictions is not allowed." There is no doubt that Aliyev wants to prosecute Kaziyev and Mutalibov "for politics." Russia is bound by an analogous commitment to the Council of Europe (just now, in Strasbourg, a Russian delegation is for the first time taking part in a session of the CE Parliamentary Assembly as a full-fledged member). Under European norms, in the event that national legislation does not provide accordingly (and there is no clear-cut regulation on the question of extradition of political emigres to CIS countries), guidance should be taken from international norms, which, incidentally, have priority in general and especially insofar as concerns human rights.

Now Moscow and Baku are trying to get out of the imbroglio. Baku is already sending signals (according to our sources, primarily under pressure from the Russian General Prosecutor's Office) that Kaziyev might not be executed, while Mutalibov will definitely not be executed: His "crimes" do not carry that sort of punishment. Mutalibov, in the hospital, is now being guarded by both Azerbaijani special services and, according to some sources, the [Russian special-purpose] "Vityaz" group. According to an Azerbaijani diplomat, in Baku, Kaziyev is being pressured to write a petition to get Aliyev to pardon him, but at the same time a large-scale political trial is being prepared against him. True, Aliyev may not really need Kaziyev publicly sharing with the judges and international observers (who could appear as a result of this case being given publicity) his reminiscences about the period when the defense minister and the then-head of the Nakhichevan region were not at all sworn enemies.

Russia: Yeltsin 'Got All He Could' From G-7 Summit

MK2304120496 Moscow SEGODNYA in Russian 23 Apr 96 p 2

[Report by Dmitriy Volkov: "Boris Yeltsin Misreads American President"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] There has been no narrowing of the gap on Russian-Iranian cooperation in the nuclear field. On the contrary, Russia on Saturday [20 April] announced the broadening of such cooperation. Bill Clinton on the same day called it a "bad idea," stating, however, that "in the final analysis, the positive results of interaction between Russia and the United States far outweigh the importance of this conflict."

There seems to be no forward movement on the NATO expansion issue either. There is, however, no total clarity in the matter, because Boris Yeltsin stated Sunday that Bill Clinton had "promised to pressure his comrades in arms" in order that "there should be no acceleration of NATO's expansion for some time," and he even assumed that Russia could secure NATO's agreement that it should ask Russia's consent for the admission of new members. Blushing, Bill Clinton limited himself to remarking that the "differences on this matter are well known," and that from his point of view, there was no change in the sides' positions.

It is hard to judge to what extent such utterances by Boris Yeltsin could undermine the American president's position. Bill Clinton is known to be criticized, and will be criticized, for being soft on Russia. He will also be criticized for the Iranian deal, for not having condemned Russia's policy in Chechnya, and for having stressed that he regarded it to be part of Russia. However, on the whole, Western observers think Mr. Clinton's foreign

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tour with Moscow as the last port of call was more successful than otherwise.

At the same time, Boris Yeltsin got all he could from the summit and his meeting with the president. He made a tough statement on NATO — and it does not matter whether the translation of Mr. Clinton's reply was precise or not. He received assurances from French President Chirac, who said that Russia's joining the G-7 is prevented merely by the absence of consensus rather than by rejection [of the idea] by the club as a whole — and it does not matter if Russia's joining the world's leading economic countries is so far only possible in words. All the propaganda effect of the meeting has been achieved. One cannot be sure, of course, that the voters will notice it. [passage omitted]

Russia: Clinton Said To Leave No Doubt of Support for Yeltsin

MK2304132596 Moscow MOSKOVSKIY KOMSOMOLETS in Russian 23 Apr 96 p 1

[Report by S. Sh.: "The Red Grievance. Uncle Sam Shuns Comrade Zyu"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Moscow diplomatic meetings have added nothing to the opposition's piggy bank. As is known, after receiving an invitation to a meeting with Clinton together with other political party leaders, Zyuganov waited until the very last moment. To all appearances Gennadiy Andreyevich [Zyuganov] was extremely annoyed and hurt by the fact that he, as "the clear favorite in the election race," was not given a separate audience with the U.S. president, thus being equated with the marginal Lebed or Yavlinskiy, not to mention other small fry. Indirect confirmation that Comrade Zyuganov was anxious for such a meeting came in Yeltsin's response to the question of how he would view a possible meeting between Clinton and Zyuganov. "If this meeting takes place in company with other political figures, my reaction would be normal. But if they meet somewhere in a separate room, talking one on one, then my attitude would be quite different," Yeltsin said. This must mean that the U.S. President not only simply rejected the Communist leader, but also told his Russian counterpart about [Zyuganov's] excessive claims, which is all the more humiliating for Zyuganov.

At the Spaso House meeting itself, where he showed up after all, he had no chance to make a detailed presentation of his party program to the lofty guest: Either others interrupted [him] or he himself did not risk that, fearing that the invited democrats, not bound by the proprieties of protocol, would ridicule his "for-external-consumption" presentation. For the most part Zyuganov kept silent.

According to MOSKOVSKIY KOMSOMOLETS' sources, hurt by this latest instance of "disrespect" shown him, the number one Communist might come out with a corresponding anti-Clinton statement today, which will also be anti-Yeltsin at the same time — to the effect that at the G-7 meeting B.N. [Boris Yeltsin] allegedly "sat on a jump seat" and that only Zyuganov can talk with the West on an equal footing. In fact, however, nothing at the "G-7+1" summit gave the Reds a chance to seize on, rounding on B.N. for "yet another concession to the damned West." The United States did not manage to get Yeltsin, bound by election conditions, to agree to tighten control of the Russian nuclear program, above all its military component.

If anything, both the "G-8" meeting and the Yeltsin-Clinton rendezvous passed extremely smoothly, like a show piece of sorts. The "great trip to Russia," as the U.S. President described it, was that indeed.

The sides made fine reciprocal propaganda concessions. Yeltsin promised to do a little thinning-out in the extremely militarized Kaliningrad enclave. Clinton will soften his position with respect to Russia's violation of the flank limitations under the Paris CFE Treaty. Yeltsin agreed to consider the poisoned chicken case a closed chapter. Clinton promised to ask his NATO colleagues not to rush with the bloc's eastward expansion. Clinton in effect repeated Moscow's original argumentation on the Chechen issue, closing his eyes to the duplicity of Yeltsin's "peace plan."

In sum, real doves cooing in the April sun.

Of course, Billy could not have stated in so many words: Yes, I am for Yeltsin, and you should vote for him. The protocol, the sense of propriety, and the opposition Republicans at home do not allow that. Yet that was what in effect happened. On several occasions, in different situations, and with different people, Clinton indicated that a change in the Kremlin power setup is fraught with basic changes in bilateral relations. Zyuganov was very annoyed to hear that, make no mistake.

Russia: Moscow G-7 Summit Seen as Yeltsin Benefit Performance

MK2304141696 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 23 Apr 96 pp 1-2

[Report by Dmitriy Gornostayev: "The Moscow Summit Has Managed To Implement Only a Minimum Program. Even So, the 'G-8' Forum and the Negotiations

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With Clinton Have Brought Dividends to Russia and Personally to Yeltsin"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] Difficulties began when military matters were raised. As it transpired, it was the Russian president who raised them. From the point of view of Russia's national interests, the positions he presented first at a working dinner and then at a "G-8" session can hardly be assessed negatively. If anything, the idea of creating a nuclear-free zone in Central and Eastern Europe best corresponds to the interests of that region and Russia itself, including in the context of NATO's eastward expansion.

And still the initiative proved somewhat premature. Yeltsin's plan, which came as a surprise to his guests, apparently stunned the G-7 leaders. The Russian Federation president delivered a 45-minute speech on the first day of the summit, not, in effect, allowing the G-7 to say a word.

To all appearances the gist of that statement was the initiative to create a nuclear-free zone in Central and Eastern Europe. Viktor Mikhaylov, Russian Federation atomic energy minister, virtually confirmed that, thus responding to your NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA correspondent's question as to whether the problem had been discussed: "This is Boris Nikolayevich [Yeltsin]'s proposal. He made it. Let the Western countries think of what to do with their nuclear weapons. In any event, sooner or later, they will evacuate their nuclear weapons to their national territory. The time will come for that." Mikhaylov said he did not know about the Western leaders' reaction.

Presumably it was not positive, because NATO expansion is involved. Therefore, should a nuclear-free zone be created in Central and Eastern Europe, the admission of some countries in that region to the North Atlantic Alliance could be a purely political affair. Moreover, the bloc itself would have to revise a number of basic NATO documents, including the 1949 Washington Treaty.

In any event, at the final press conference by summit cochairmen Boris Yeltsin and Jacques Chirac the former sought to avoid that subject, omitting it from the list of Russia's nuclear security proposals. [passage omitted]

Yeltsin also highlighted Clinton's promise not to push the issue of NATO expansion for the time being and to influence his partners in the bloc accordingly. In a possible outcome to a years-long debate, the Russian head of state proffered an incredibly bold option: "Maybe we should conclude a treaty whereby no country may be admitted to NATO without Russia's consent. And this question should be addressed only on the basis of consensus."

Changing countenance a little, Clinton presented his own — not so categorical — vision of the problem, noting, as usual, that the disagreements were discussed frankly, and expressing his hope for success in the search for compromise.

The date of the summit and of Clinton's visit to Moscow is indicative of the extent to which these events impact on the election campaign in the United States and, to a larger degree, in Russia. The presidents went out of their way to reject the charges of allegedly using the forum for consolidating their positions ahead of the elections. Yeltsin, however, missed no chance of saying: "I am sure that I will be the winner."

Presumably Boris Nikolayevich had occasion to see support for himself on the part of his Western colleagues. Jacques Chirac and Bill Clinton were especially remarkable in that respect, noting Yeltsin's personal contribution as a prime mover of Russian reform. The U.S. President, furthermore, invoked the Civil War in the United States to show that Chechnya is part of Russia.

Official sources will certainly not reveal whether the presidents pledged reciprocal support for each other. Even so, it is clear that the forum and the series of bilateral meetings have added more points to Yeltsin's bank as a presidential candidate. Along with the practical results in nuclear safety and security and in upholding Russia's national interests, Boris Yeltsin augmented his electoral credit by a simple but very important achievement: Thanks to his efforts the elite of state leaders gathered in Moscow, thus clearly boosting Russia's authority in the world and, in a certain sense, Yeltsin's authority among the people of Russia.

That the forum was useful to Boris Yeltsin was, in a way, confirmed, among others, by Yabloko faction leader Grigoriy Yavlinskiy. Responding to your NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA correspondent's question after Bill Clinton's meeting with Russia's leading politicians, he said: "This is the way among incumbent presidents: to support each other. Generally, however, this forum indicates an attitude to Russia, not to a particular individual." Gennadiy Zyuganov responded somewhat differently to the same question by saying that an absolute majority of the Russian people are dissatisfied with current policy.

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Political Issues

Russia: Yeltsin Visit to Khabarovsk, Meeting With Citizens Viewed

LD2304190796 Moscow Russian Public Television First Channel Network in Russian 1700 GMT 23 Apr 96

[Video report by Correspondent Voznesenskiy; from the "Novosti" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Announcer Arina Sharapova] President Yeltsin has arrived in Khabarovsk. At the airport he said he planned to make 16 business trips in May. I will travel through half of Russia, he said. Now for the details.

President of the Russian Federation Boris Yeltsin started his working trip to the Far East in Khabarovsk. Our correspondent reports on whom he met in Khabarovsk and what places he visited.

[Correspondent Voznesenskiy] The president's plane, which flew from the capital early in the morning today, landed in Khabarovsk close to midnight, because of the difference in the time zones. Vladimir Kadannikov, first deputy prime minister, and a group of ministers were already waiting there for Yeltsin. They had been conferring today with heads of industrial enterprises in the territory, mainly those of the defense industry.

Viktor Ishayev, head of the administration of the Khabarovsk Territory, welcomed Yeltsin as the host. [video shows Yeltsin descending from the plane and being met by Ishayev; being welcomed in the traditional Russian way by two girls in national costume who offered him bread and salt; Yeltsin talking to journalists at the airport]

Yeltsin told journalists at the airport it had been a long time since he had been in these parts, but he had not come empty-handed to the Far East residents and tomorrow the long-awaited program of the long-term development of the region up to the year 2005 would be signed in the city on the Amur river. Later, meeting citizens on the streets at night, the president said that Russia's development should start from the territories and why not start with the Khabarovsk Territory?

The journalists were interested in the course of the election campaign.

[begin recording] [Yeltsin] I must say that at last it has now become sufficiently clear and organized, so to speak. There are headquarters and support committees for the president everwhere. Now there must be active work with the people. I am meeting workforces.

[Unidentified journalist] What about your health? Is it difficult?

[Yeltsin] Well, it is all right.

[Journalist] Boris Nikolayevich, what other regions of Russia are you planning to visit in May?

[Yeltsin] Well, the month of May is a very difficult one for me; I will have 16 business trips in May.

[Journalist, laughing] And we will travel with you.

[Yeltsin] So there is a lot ahead. I will travel over at least half of Russia. [end recording] [video shows Yeltsin ending interview; an official car; motorcade driving away]

[Voznesenskiy] In spite of the fact that tomorrow the president expects to have a very packed day in Khabarovsk and a flight to Beijing, Boris Yeltsin asked to stop the motorcade on the way and here is a meeting with the Khabarovsk citizens in the street at midnight. [video shows Yeltsin, out of the car, waving to people, going to them, shaking hands, talking with them; crowds shout and whistle in approval; voice shouts "We will all vote for you."]

[Voznesenskiy] The decree that Yeltsin will sign tomorrow will give the program for the development of the region the status of a presidential program.

Russia: Yeltsin Signs Law on Raising Minimum Wage

MM2404121296 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 24 Apr 96 p 1

[Russian Federation Federal Law No. 40 "On Raising the Minimum Wage," adopted by the State Duma 20 March 1996, approved by the Federation Council 10 April 1996, signed by Russian Federation President Boris Yeltsin on 22 April 1996]

[FBIS Translated Text] Article 1. The minimum wage is to be set at 75,900 rubles [R] per month as of 1 April 1996.

Article 2. The minimum wage set by Article 1 of this federal law is introduced:

— by organizations funded from budget sources — out of the relevant budget funds;

— by other organizations — out of their own funds.

Article 3. Grants for students at higher vocational educational establishments, pupils at secondary vocational and primary vocational educational establishments, and full-time post-graduate students on post-graduate courses at higher vocational educational establishments and research establishments, along with the corresponding

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benefits and other social payments are fixed on the basis of the minimum wage laid down in Article 1 of this federal law.

Article 4. Expenditure associated with the payments envisaged in Article 3 of this federal law is effected from the current sources of their funding.

Article 5. The payment of taxes, imposts, and other payments made in accordance with legislation dependent on the minimum wage is made on the basis of the minimum wage laid down by Article 1 of this federal law.

Article 6. Federal law No. 1590 "On Raising the Minimum Wage" of 1 November 1995 (SOBRANIYE ZAKONODATELSTVA ROSSIYSKOY FEDERATSII, 1995, No. 45, p. 4325) is hereby deemed invalid.

Article 7. This federal law comes into force 1 April 1996, save Article 5, which is enacted on the day that this federal law is officially published.

[signed] Russian Federation President Boris Yeltsin

[dated] The Kremlin, Moscow, 22 April 1996
No. 40

Russia: Yeltsin Edict Offers Farmers More 'Favorable Conditions'

MM2504101696 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 23 Apr 96 p 4

[Russian Federation Presidential Edict No. 565, signed by President Yeltsin on 16 April 1996: "On Measures To Stabilize the Economic Situation and Develop Reform in the Agro-Industrial Complex" — carried under the general heading "President Gives Crop Farmers Major Opportunity"]

[FBIS Translated Text] With a view to stabilizing the economic situation in the agro-industrial complex, creating favorable conditions for boosting production of agricultural raw materials and foodstuffs, improving the social protection available to rural people, and further deepening agrarian reform, I decree that:

1. It shall be laid down that the main avenues of state policy in the reform of the agro-industrial complex are:

— the promotion of the creation and activity of effective economic structures in the agro-industrial complex, with the utilization of the funds provided for in the federal budget to support agricultural organizations irrespective of their organizational-legal form;

— state funding for the restructuring of agro-industrial complex organizations, the recapitalization of loss-making agricultural enterprises, and information and personnel backup for agrarian reform funded by the federal budget, Russian Federation component budgets, and nonbudgetary sources;

— the development of cooperative relations in the agro-industrial complex as the highest-priority avenue of agrarian reform, including support for the creation by agricultural commodity producers of production, processing, supply, sales, agricultural service, credit, insurance, and other kinds of cooperatives;

— the provision to newly created peasant (private) farms of start-up financial support for the acquisition of agricultural machinery and equipment.

2. The Russian Federation Government and Russian Federation component executive agencies shall, with a view to implementing the main avenues of state policy in reforming the agro-industrial complex:

— complete by 1 August 1996 the development of federal and regional programs for the development of peasant (private) farms and agricultural cooperatives in 1996-2000 aimed at creating the organizational, economic, and social conditions for their stable functioning;

— carry out measures in 1996-1998 to equip peasant (private) farms with hardware on the following basis: a row-crop tractor for every 50 hectares of arable land; a plowing tractor with the necessary range of agricultural machinery for every 100 hectares; and a grain harvesting combine and a truck for every 150 hectares of grain and oilseed crops. In order to improve the servicing of peasant (private) farms the network of machine-tractor stations and machinery and equipment hire centers of various forms of ownership should be developed;

— provide budget funds for the construction, expansion, and modernization of agricultural and processing production facilities on a repayable basis, with their subsequent utilization for the same purposes.

3. With a view to ensuring the financial stability of the agro-industrial complex, agricultural commodity producers and processing industry organizations, apart from consumer cooperative organizations, shall be exempted from debt payments:

— on the deferred commodity loan for 1995 as of 1 April 1996 in the amount of 5.1 trillion rubles [R] until 1998;

— on the rescheduled centralized loans issued in 1992-1994, and the interest due on them until 2005.

The Russian Federation Government, the Russian Federation Pension Fund, the Federal Compulsory Medical Insurance Fund, the Russian Federation State Fund for

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the Employment of the Population, and the Russian Federation Social Insurance Fund shall grant a deferment under the established procedure for the levying of fines in 1996 on debts owed by agricultural commodity producers and processing industry organizations on taxes and payments to the federal budget and corresponding payments to nonbudgetary funds.

The exemption from the payment of amounts owed to the federal budget under rescheduled centralized loans and the interest on them issued to processing industry organizations shall be granted on condition that not less than 51 percent of voting shares (equity, stakes) in these organizations is held by agricultural commodity producers.

The Russian Federation Government shall take measures to restore the property rights of shareholder-members of consumer cooperative organizations, and shall draw up and submit to the Russian Federation Federal Assembly State Duma within one month a draft federal law envisaging protection for the property rights of shareholder-members of consumer cooperative organizations.

4. As of 1 May 1996 payment in the amount of not more than 50 percent of the electricity tariff applying on the territories in question shall be introduced for the utilization of electricity by agricultural commodity producers for production needs.

5. The Russian Federation Government shall set up in 1997 a special fund to provide loans to agro-industrial complex organizations on preferential terms, charging no more than 25 percent of the Russian Federation Central Bank discount rate.

6. It shall be laid down that organizations purchasing output from agricultural commodity producers shall pay for it on a priority basis once taxes to budgets at all levels and contributions to the Russian Federation Pension Fund, the Federal Compulsory Medical Insurance Fund, the Russian Federation State Fund for the Employment of the Population, and the Russian Federation Social Insurance Fund have been paid.

7. Partially amending Russian Federation Presidential Edict No. 1928 "On Private Investment in the Russian Federation" of 17 September 1994 (SOBRANIYE ZAKONODATELSTVA ROSSIYSKOY FEDERATSII, No. 22, 1994, p. 2462; No. 4, 1996, p. 267), it shall be laid down that projects implemented using investment placed on a competitive basis shall be given no more than three years to recover their costs in the food and processing industries, and no more than five years for agricultural production facilities, and that federal budget funds shall be allocated for no longer than 48 months.

8. The Russian Federation Government shall:

— channel R800 billion in 1996 in loans to allow peasant (private) farms and other agricultural commodity producers to acquire land;

— make provision as of 1997 in draft federal budgets for the allocation of financing for the formation and activity of special regional leasing funds to provide material and technical support for agro-industrial complex organizations on preferential terms, as well as a separate line-item covering expenditure on investment in the agro-industrial complex placed on a competitive basis;

— swiftly regulate the level of import customs duty with a view to protecting Russian agricultural commodity producers and, if necessary, bringing the quotas for the purchase of certain types of imported foodstuffs into line with international regulations and federal legislation.

9. Russian Federation component state and local government bodies shall be instructed to streamline within the limits of their purview the taxation of peasant (private) farms, with a view to abolishing or reducing the level of taxes during the initial period of their operations.

The Russian Federation Government shall submit within one month under the established procedure proposals on extending the tax concession to peasant (private) farms granted under Article 12 of the RSFSR law "On Payment for Land" and on maintaining for processing, service, and construction enterprises which have distinguished themselves in the course of the reorganization of kolkhozes, sovkhozes, rural construction organizations, and other agro-industrial enterprises the taxation and financing concessions laid down for agricultural enterprises for a five-year period, provided that no less than 70 percent of the aforesaid enterprises' work (services) is done for agricultural commodity producers.

10. The Belgorod Oblast initiative of creating funds to support individual housing construction in the countryside shall be supported.

Russian Federation component state authorities and local government agencies shall annually make provision in their territorial and local budgets for financing to shape long-term loan funds for housing construction in the countryside.

The Russian Federation Government shall:

— allocate R500 billion from the federal budget on a repayable basis for the aforesaid purposes;

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— make provision as of 1997 in draft federal budgets within the federal investment program for funds in the amount of at least R2 trillion for long-term loans to rural inhabitants for individual housing construction.

11. The Russian Federation Government and Russian Federation component executive agencies shall:

— ensure the transfer by 1 January 1997 of municipally owned agricultural organizations' social and engineering infrastructure to local government bodies in rural settlements;

— make provision in the corresponding budgets for funds to finance expenditure on the upkeep of the social and engineering infrastructure facilities still controlled by agricultural enterprises.

12. The Russian Federation Ministry of Agriculture and Food, as well as corresponding Russian Federation component executive agencies shall be considered the authorized state bodies in the sphere of land reclamation.

It shall be laid down that the Russian Federation Ministry of Agriculture and Food is the leading agency in the administration of the agro-industrial complex and food supplies.

The Russian Federation Government shall:

— transfer the powers of the Russian Federation State Committee for the Management of State Property and its territorial organs in administering state-owned installations and federally owned blocks of shares in agro-industrial complex joint-stock enterprises to the Russian Federation Ministry of Agriculture and Food, other federal executive agencies in the agro-industrial complex, and corresponding Russian Federation component executive agencies;

— examine the questions of organizing the administration of enterprises involved in land reclamation and the production and technical servicing of the agro-industrial complex.

13. Amending Paragraph 1 of Russian Federation Presidential Edict No. 84 "On the Russian Academy of Agricultural Sciences" of 30 January 1992, it shall be laid down that the Russian Academy of Agricultural Sciences is part of the Russian Federation Ministry of Agriculture and Food and is a supreme self-governing scientific organization, operating on the basis of federal laws and its own statutes.

In order to coordinate the academic process and scientific research, the Russian Federation first deputy minister of agriculture and food is ex officio president of the Russian Academy of Agricultural Sciences.

14. This edict comes into force from the day it is published.

[signed] Russian Federation President B. Yeltsin

[dated] Moscow, the Kremlin, 16 April 1996
No. 565

Russia: Court Rules in Favor of President on Lawmaking Procedure

MK2404125896 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 23 Apr 96 p 2

[Report by Konstantin Katanyan: "How Laws Are Adopted. The Duma Has Lost to the President in the Legal Dispute Over Constitutional Interpretation"]

[FBIS Translated Text] A federal law that has been passed by parliamentarians can now be returned by the Russian Federation president without consideration, if, during the adoption of this statutory act, some violations were made that call into question the results of this expression of the Federal Assembly houses' will. Such a ruling was made by the Russian Constitutional Court [KC], which interpreted Article 107 of the Fundamental Law, specifying the procedure for adopting a federal law.

Thus, the court refused to accept the arguments of State Duma representatives, who believed that a document that has not been signed by the head of state should be regarded as turned down using the right of veto and, hence, the president cannot turn down this law again should he be discontented with its text rather than the procedure for its adoption.

At the same time, the president, to use his right of veto, should do so within just two weeks of receipt of a federal law. In turning it down, the head of state should specify the reasons he refused to sign the passed law, and should make this public. Should the president be unable to do this within 14 days, according to the KC ruling, the decision to turn down the law does not have veto power and does not entail any legal consequences.

Answering other questions posed to the KC by the Russian president and the two houses of the Federal Assembly, the KC explained that a passed law is a statutory act that has been passed by the State Duma and approved by the Federation Council. Laws are also considered as passed should the parliament overcome a presidential veto or the State Duma override a veto of the upper house of the parliament. A passed law is to be submitted for the head of state's signature by the upper house of the parliament. The only exceptions are cases where the State Duma repasses a draft law that has been turned down by the Federation Council.

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As reported earlier, the State Duma attempted to gain the right to also submit to the president for signature and public disclosure laws that have been kept at the Federation Council in excess of the 14-day term specified by the Constitution. The KC, however, took the side of the president and the upper house, both of which believed that the lawmaking process should proceed in full conformity with a clear-cut "State Duma-Federation Council-president" algorithm, and that any deviations from this order lead to a confusion.

In addition, the KC elucidated that the provision whereby the Federation Council has the right to approve laws both by voting and by default — i.e., by not considering them over the same 14-day period — do not apply to cases where the houses of parliament are to overcome a presidential veto. In the opinion of the KC, a law that has been turned down by the president, and which has been repassed by the State Duma in the previous wording by a two-thirds vote, is regarded as adopted only upon its approval by a qualified majority of Federation Council members.

Mikhail Mityukov, presidential envoy to the KC, was very content with such an outcome for the court session. "The court has confirmed the correctness of the president on all matters mentioned in his appeal," he said. As for the State Duma, it is now certain to suspect the court of conspiring with the head of state and those Federation Council members who assume a pro-presidential stance.

Russia: Zhirinovskiy Plans East European Counterweight to NATO

AU2404124696 Bratislava NARODNA OBRODA in Slovak 24 Apr 96 pp 1, 7

[Interview with Russian presidential candidate Vladimir Zhirinovskiy by Blazej Panik in Moscow; date not given: "Zhirinovskiy Dreams About His Own Eastern NATO"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The leader of Russian nationalists Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, one of the candidates in the June presidential elections, who is planning a grand celebration of his 50th birthday tomorrow, wants to establish a wide-ranging "eastern" community of states as a counterweight to NATO. As he said in his typical style in an interview for NARODNA OBRODA, Russia need not worry about potential candidates for membership in its "own NATO."

"They will wish it themselves and will line up (for membership in the pro-Russian bloc)," declared Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, who specifically mentioned Belarus, Ukraine, Serbia, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Bulgaria, and even Greece, Cyprus, Iraq, and India.

Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, leader of the nationalistic Liberal Democratic Party of Russia (LDPR), undeniably the most colorful personality of the post-Soviet political scene in Moscow, is one of the candidates in the June presidential elections. He wants to win voters' votes, first and foremost, by emphasizing that he embodies the "third vigorous force" as an alternative for those who reject Boris Yeltsin's present power and simultaneously fear victory of the communist candidate Gennadiy Zyuganov.

[Panik] What would be your first steps if you became president?

[Zhirinovskiy] I would take leave, and all of Russia would simply get a few days rest.

[Panik] Come on — if you were to speak more seriously....

[Zhirinovskiy] We will abolish all republics and autonomous oblasts established on the ethnic principle and will set up provinces [gubernie] in their stead. We will change the taxation system and foreign policy. We will renew relations with our former partners. We will not be oriented toward only some country, but will establish relations with those, with whom relations are beneficial for us, and were beneficial in the past.

[Panik] What is your economic program?

[Zhirinovskiy] We will develop both the state and the private sectors. And we will trade on the basis of world market prices. We will no longer give anyone anything for free. We will also protect our own producers.

[Panik] How?

[Zhirinovskiy] Of course, not by closing our borders but by means of various protective or, if your want, protectionist measures. There can be no doubt about that.

[Panik] What are you going to do with Chechnya?

[Zhirinovskiy] First and foremost, we will not allow a single journalist in. And we will put an end to the war very quickly.

[Panik] How do you want to achieve that?

[Zhirinovskiy] By force. Negotiations lead nowhere. In general, we will take resolute steps in combating crime in the country.

[Panik] Resolute in which respect?

[Zhirinovskiy] We will deliver a blow to crime. It will be a whole set of unorthodox measures.

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[Panik] What is your vision of European security? How do you want to react to the planned enlargement of NATO?

[Zhirinovskiy] We will establish an East European community, our own East European NATO. Whoever wants will be able to join. Russia, Belarus, Ukraine, Serbia, Slovakia, the Czech Republic — simply, everyone who will wish to join. Iraq and India, too, if you wish.

[Panik] And what if these countries will not want to join?

[Zhirinovskiy] So what? We will be alone.... But they will want. Bulgaria will want to join, Greece, Cyprus. They will come to us and will line up. I repeat, they are going to wait in line. Even Slovakia.

Military & Space Issues

Russia: Commander Praises Black Sea Fleet Crews on Exercise

MM2404081896 Moscow Russian Public Television First Channel Network in Russian 1400 GMT 15 Apr 96

[From the "Novosti" newscast: Video report by Vladimir Plotnikov, identified by caption, on Black Sea Fleet exercises; figures in brackets denote broadcast time in GMT in hours, minutes, and seconds]

[FBIS Translated Text] [140633] [Plotnikov over video of ship's radar, ships at sea] The very fact that these exercises are being held is a sensation. For almost three years the Black Sea Fleet has not put to sea in such numbers — 46 ships, plus submarine and air forces.

The exercises have confirmed that the naval servicemen have kept their powder dry and that their training has not been in vain. Artillery shells, anti-submarine torpedoes, and cruise missiles hit their targets accurately. Modern electronic warfare means were also successfully applied. Summing up the first phase of the exercises, the fleet commander paid tribute not just to the officers' and warrant officers' combat skills.

[Viktor Kravchenko, commander of the Black Sea Fleet, identified by caption] I thank them for maintaining the ships, and above all for putting to sea after the statements of certain individuals and high-ranking leaders to the effect that the Black Sea Fleet as such [?was going to cease to exist].

[Plotnikov over ships at sea] Practically without a break, the second stage of the exercises has started. Its main event will be a landing operation. Vladimir Plotnikov, Vladimir Badikov, and Aleksandr Lebedev reporting for Russian Public Television from the naval exercise area. [140740] [video shows ships at sea, firing practice, interview, more ships at sea]

Russia: Military Leaders View Current Draft Problems

MM2504094896 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 24 Apr 96 pp 1, 3

[Report by Nikolay Poroskov: "Spring Draft-96: A Total of 200,200 New Recruits Are To Join the Ranks. So Military Commissariats Have Their Work Cut Out"]

[FBIS Translated Text] As KRASNAYA ZVEZDA has already reported, a training methods conference involving leadership personnel from organization and mobilization directorates of the main staffs of the branches of the Armed Forces, military district staffs, and military commissariats from 79 regions of Russia has been held, based at the Moscow Oblast Induction Center. The purpose of the conference was to formulate consistent views on the organization and methods of mobilization and draft-registration work and the official activity of military commissariats, proceeding from the new legislative acts and the orders and directives of the defense minister and the chief of the Russian Federation Armed Forces General Staff.

The conference participants were addressed by Army General Pavel Grachev, Russian Federation minister of defense. The problem of the danger of war has not been completely removed, he pointed out, and so the military commissariats' chief task is to maintain the mobilization readiness of units and combined units and of the military commissariats themselves. This makes it necessary to plan and actually rehearse various means of mobilizing human and transport resources, bringing the manning of units and combined units up to wartime levels, and transferring evacuated resources, to efficiently organize the management of the draft, and to cooperate with the military units stationed in the regions and with Civil Defense and Emergency Situations Ministry agencies, state and local government authorities, the MVD [Ministry of Internal Affairs] and FSB [Federal Security Service], and enterprises and organizations.

Management consistency remains a "bottleneck." The General Staff is planning to deliver new equipment to the military commissariats in the very near future, but they themselves must also use the regions' scientific and production potential and local budgets to purchase, for example, nonstandard [netabelnyy] radio sets and automated recording systems. There is a need for monthly elaboration of mobilization plans and for quarterly control notification of citizens who are in the reserve.

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The standard of training of citizens in the reserve and attached to military units is alarming: It is falling every year. The reason is well known: There are insufficient funds to hold military reservists' refresher courses.

In 1995 there were 370,000 instances of citizens' evading military registration. Notification on citizens who have been classed as invalids, who have died, or who have been convicted of crimes is provided to commissariats belatedly or does not reach them at all. Closer links are needed with civil registrar's office organs, industrial disease expert commissions, and courts. Increased migration trends demand closer cooperation between military commissariats and internal affairs agencies. In accordance with the Statute on Military Registration approved by Russian Federation Government 22 March 1995 Decree No. 292, registration must be conducted at all enterprises regardless of forms of ownership. But even where registration is carried out, it is not always planned properly.

Army General Pavel Grachev reported that training of servicemen serving in accordance with the draft in a main military registration specialty plus an additional one began in 1995. Military commissariats in turn are recommended to conduct involve citizens who are in the reserve and attached to troop units in exercises in their free time from work.

Despite the planned reduction in the number of troops, the need for draft resources is not diminishing, since the tasks facing the Armed Forces are growing. Increasing mobility and readiness for immediate use require the Army's manning level to be maintained at at least 85 percent, and even higher for the Strategic Missile Forces, the Airborne Forces, and sections of the Air Force and the Navy. It follows from this that drafting work must be conducted with greater thoroughness, and there is a need to cooperate closely with education and ROSTO [Russian Defense, Sports, and Technical Organization] organs, to foster in young people a sense of duty to defend the fatherland, and to resume primary military training in schools, vocational and technical schools, and technical colleges. It is necessary to ensure priority staffing, the Russian defense minister emphasized, of control organs, communications, intelligence, and electronic warfare units, and those combined combat units that tackle important, priority tasks with short readiness times. Henceforth the units in the Chechen Republic will be manned only by contract servicemen.

Certain politicians and mass media, Army General Pavel Grachev said, are exacerbating the situation with regard to Armed Forces manning. If there are no real enemies, they believe, then there is no need to maintain such a burdensome Army. This leads to a reduction in the prestige of service. Military district staffs and military commissariats, jointly with executive authorities and internal affairs agencies locally, must examine the results of the 1996 draft campaign now under way and take measures to fulfill the draft targets set in the Russian Federation presidential edict.

Army General Mikhail Kolesnikov, chief of the General Staff, reported to conference participants on the prospects for developing the Russian Federation Armed Forces and improving their organizational structure. He pointed out that the last similar measure was in 1993. A lack of funds prevented such a conference from being held later. This one had been held thanks to "sponsors" — the administrations of Moscow and Moscow Oblast. A slump in mobilization work was noted at the conference three years ago, but the General Staff had succeeded in turning around the negative course of events. The country's government had adopted the new "Statute on Military Commissariats (Local Organs of Military Management)," and the organization and establishment of military commissariats was being improved. The draft law "On Mobilization Training and Mobilization in the Russian Federation" was currently with the Russian Federation presidential apparatus. It was greatly needed today, as were, incidentally, the allocation of budgetary (including local) funds to mobilization training and a ban on floating shares in enterprises and privatizing them without agreeing this with the mobilization agencies of ministries and departments.

One of the problems dictated exclusively by the present situation in the state is the Army's cooperation with Cossack public organizations. The conference participants were told about this by Lieutenant General Vasiliy Smirnov, chief of one of the directorates of the General Staff Main Organization and Mobilization Directorate. On the whole, he said, the Russian Ministry of Defense supports the need for a consistent course in implementing the state program for a Cossack revival, but account has to be taken today of the fact that there has been a fundamental change in the tasks, structure, and military-technical equipment of the Russian Armed Forces themselves.

Proceeding from the basic provisions of the Russian Federation's military doctrine, the concept of the Armed Forces' development, and the Russian Federation presidential edict of 15 March 1993, Lt. Gen. Smirnov pointed out, the Ministry of Defense has defined its position with regard to the Cossack community: Cossacks must serve in accordance with existing legislation in units and combined units of the unified Armed Forces, in the Border Troops, or in other Russian Federation troops.

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Today there are 32 military subunits and units in the Russian Federation Armed Forces that are manned primarily by Cossacks. These units are included on the list brought into effect by a Russian Federation Government decree of 22 April 1994. In all, 4,924 Cossacks have been sent into the troops since the fall of 1994, 2,387 Cossacks are to be drafted this spring, and 2,646 more in the fall.

Military commissars are recommended to arrange contacts with Cossack societies, at the same time explaining that it is necessary to be guided by state interests, not community interests, when manning and performing service. Mobilization plans preserve the territorial principle of manning, and the draft preserves the extraterritorial principle. If a draftee so wishes, information on his membership of the Cossack community may be included in the military registration documents, but only if there is a certificate from a Cossack society. The section "Special Notes" in the military service card may state: Cossack. Mindful of the fact that not only Cossacks will serve in the military units, the introduction of Cossack dress uniform is unacceptable. But provision can be made for the wearing of insignia attesting to membership of a Cossack community.

Because the necessary number of Cossack draftees is lacking, the full manning of the units on the aforesaid list is impossible today: A level of, perhaps, 30-40 percent is all that can be achieved. In the long term it is planned to have one or two "Cossack" units in a region or military district that are most fully manned by Cossack youths.

Colonel General Vyacheslav Zherebtsov, chief of the General Staff Main Organization and Mobilization Directorate, dwelt in detail, from a practical viewpoint, on the question of mobilization readiness. He reported, in particular, that in 1995 the General Staff jointly with the interested ministries and departments had worked out a normative base for recording transport movements and drawn up a government decree and a General Staff directive on maintaining its level of readiness. There are government recommendations on exempting enterprises which maintain troop-type truck columns from paying taxes into local budgets. Military commissariats are to monitor the attachment of personnel and hardware from other enterprises to these columns to make up their numbers.

The question of manning the Armed Forces remains complex, the chief of the General Staff Main Organization and Mobilization Directorate pointed out: There is a growing number of deferments for health reasons, the number of citizens who are unfit for peacetime military service is increasing, and many draftees are sent by commissions for additional medical screening. According to documents, 60 percent of draftees in Ulyanovsk Oblast proved to be sick, although an independent expert appraisal amended this figure significantly downward. Consequently there is also a need to monitor the medical commissions.

This year it is planned to draft just over 200,000 young men. The list of draft deferments remains as before, with 53 percent granted for continuing education. According to the results of a recent campaign, 61,000 draftees are suffering from dystrophy. There is a clear need to improve the legislation governing the draft, including criminal legislation. A joint Defense Ministry, MVD, and General Prosecutor's Office document concerning people who evade service was signed recently.

Col. Gen. Zherebtsov set military commissariats the task of continuing work on perpetuating the memory of the motherland's fallen defenders. Of the almost 40,000 military burial places, memorials, and monuments on the territory of Russia, only half have been properly identified. Not a single "Unknown" inscription must remain on them.

Questions of alternative service, local defense, the "reserving" of specialists for a war period, and other matters were examined during the conference.

Russia: Defence Ministry Launches Cosmos Satellite 24 Apr

LD2404144596 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1418 GMT 24 Apr 96

[By Veronika Romanenkova and Viktor Gritsenko]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, April 24 (Itar-Tass) — A Cosmos-3M booster was launched from the Plesetsk grounds at 17:00 Moscow time (14:00 GMT).

The booster will put into orbit a Cosmos satellite for the interests of the Russian Defence Ministry, sources in the press service of the Russian Space Force told Itar-Tass.

Federal Assembly

Russia: Duma's Belovezhskaya Accords 'Primarily Political'

MM2404113496 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 24 Apr 96 p 5

[Unattributed report: "At the State Duma: Deputies Think That People Got Them Wrong" — from the "Documents" section]

[FBIS Translated Text] The country has found itself in an ambiguous position following the adoption of the

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two State Duma decrees on the Belovezhskaya Accords and the referendum on the preservation of the USSR. If you follow the logic of these documents, doubt has been cast on all the legal acts adopted since December 1991 and the international treaties concluded by Russia since then. The Duma decisions also elicited a negative response from a number of CIS leaders.

Comprehending the full gravity of the situation and the possible consequences for the country and attempting to help deputies to break the deadlock that they themselves have caused, the Russian Federation president sent a draft law to the lower chamber "On Ensuring the Stability of the Russian Federation Legal System and Confirming Russia's International Commitments." Members of the Federation Council made a move in the same direction. They asked the State Duma to reconsider these decrees.

After a lengthy debate the State Duma has responded to both the president and the Federation Council. The parliamentarians adopted a decree "On the Stability of the Russian Federation Legal System" in response to the head of state's legislative initiative. It points out that the chamber's decrees on the Belovezhskaya Accords and the referendum on the preservation of the USSR reflect deputies' civic and political stance and do not affect the stability of the Russian Federation's legal system or its international commitments. The Russian Federation president was advised to recall the draft law that he had submitted to the parliament.

The deputies responded to the appeal from their colleagues in the upper chamber with their own. In it they drew their attention to the fact that these documents are primarily political in nature and voice an assessment of the prevailing situation. But they have no bearing on Russian sovereignty, let alone that of the other CIS States. The decrees do not and cannot eliminate the Commonwealth of Independent States, which is a real institution today and of which maximum use must be made in order to deepen the processes of integration. These processes can only occur on a voluntary, even-handed basis, which precludes coercion, never mind the use of force.

The appeal notes that the idea contained in the documents — that the RSFSR Supreme Soviet 12 December 1991 Decree should be deemed invalid — has no effect on state organs formed in accordance with the Constitution and federal law. For their part the parliamentarians will do everything they can to deepen and develop the processes of integration.

Russia: Shokhin Sees Duma Short on Lawmaking, Long on Politics

MK2404120896 Moscow KOMMERSANT-DAILY in Russian 23 Apr 96 p 2

[Report by Yevgeniy Yuryev: "Duma Prefers Politics to Lawmaking"]

[FBIS Translated Text] State Duma deputies devote almost 60 percent of the time during their meetings to matters unrelated to lawmaking. The greater part of time is spent in "political battles" and the passing of appeals, statements, and decrees on separate issues. This was announced in yesterday's news briefing by Duma Deputy Chairman Aleksandr Shokhin.

In the opinion of Shokhin, who is in charge of lawmaking in the Duma, a critical situation prevails in this area. Proposed draft laws are held up at all the stages mainly "due to political motives." As few as 97 of the 227 questions included in the agenda of State Duma plenary sessions between 7 February and 5 April were devoted to lawmaking proper. Under the consideration of [Duma] committees at the moment are 139 draft laws, of which 43 were introduced by the president and 96 by the Russian Federation Government. Notably, nine of them were put to the Duma more than one year ago. Shokhin noted that the committees did not even submit these draft laws for consideration by the Duma council.

Shokhin also announced that only one of the 21 laws called for by the new Civil Code has been passed. The law "On Government" has been waiting to be passed since December of 1994. Also lying on the shelf since the same time is the draft law introduced by the government "On the State System of Medical Care." The draft law "On Alternative Civil Service" that passed the first reading on 14 December 1994 has not been put to second vote since. It has not been possible to pass a new Criminal Code and laws "On Combating Corruption" or "On Combating Organized Crime."

Shokhin thinks that this bent toward politicizing revives the tradition of petty intervention in the competence of the executive authority. The unwillingness to consider the opinion of the Russian Federation president and the Federation Council turns the meetings "into a meaningless political duel." In order to channel the Duma's operation to proceed fruitfully, Shokhin proposed altering the house rules and, in particular, cutting back its 90-minute agenda debates.

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Russia: Duma Adopts Personal Security Law on Top Officials

LD2404184596 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1704 GMT 24 Apr 96

[By Natalya Panshina]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, April 24 (ITAR-TASS) — The State Duma on Wednesday adopted a law on security of Russia's top officials which obliging [as received] the President to use bodyguard services from the date of official announcement of election results up to his death.

The President may not refuse from personal security service. The President's family members must be guarded during his or her term of office.

In case of top officials, security services must be provided by officers of the President's Security Service, the Federal Security Service, the interior, foreign intelligence, and agencies in charge of communications within the government.

Other positions entitled to have bodyguards include the prime minister, the speakers of the two parliament houses, chairmen of the Constitutional Court, the Supreme Court, and the High Arbitration Court, and the Public Prosecutor.

Russia: Duma Passes Law on National, Cultural Autonomy

LD2404190796 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1332 GMT 24 Apr 96

[By ITAR-TASS parliamentary correspondent Igor Zhukov]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Moscow, 24 April (ITAR-TASS) — Today the State Duma passed in a second reading the federal law "On National-Cultural Autonomy" mentioned in the Russian president's message to the Federal Assembly. Three hundred and thirty one deputies voted for the decision, two against, and one abstained. The document is to ensure the rights and freedoms of persons belonging to different ethnic groups living in the Russian Federation. The law guarantees preservation and development of the national languages and cultures of the numerous indigenous peoples living in Russia. [passage omitted]

Russia: Duma Approves Law on Exclusive Economic Zone

LD2404195696 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1851 GMT 24 Apr 96

[By Nataliya Panshina]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, April 24 (ITAR-TASS) — The State Duma gave an overall improvement to the federal law on the exclusive economic zone of the Russian Federation on Wednesday.

The law defines the exclusive economic zone as a maritime area outside the so-called territorial sea of the Russian Federation and adjacent to it.

The definition will be applied to all Russian islands.

The internal boundaries of such a zone will be the external border of the territorial sea. The latter will be located 200 nautical miles from the point from which the width of the territorial sea is measured.

The borders of the zone between Russia and other countries whose coasts are situated opposite the Russian shores will be established on the basis of Russia's international agreements and international law.

A special legal regime will be established in such areas where Russia will exercise, based on its economic, trade, scientific and other interests, sovereign rights. However, this will not interfere with navigation, air traffic and other rights and freedoms of other countries.

Russia will also have a sovereign right to prospect for, develop, extract and conserve living and nonliving resources, as well as conduct maritime research.

Regional Affairs

Russia: Shamil Basayev Says 'Nothing' About Dudayev's Death

NC2404210496 Baku TURAN in English 1545 GMT 24 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Baku, 24 April, 1996, TURAN — Addressing on television on April 23 at night Shamil Basayev, the field commander, did not speak about death of Dzhokhar Dudayev, TURAN was told by Ruslan Abdurzakov, Deputy Foreign Minister in the government of Dudayev.

"Shamil Basayev confirmed fact of death of military prosecutor of Chechnya and people accompanying him, and presented his condolences, but he said nothing about Dudayev," Abduezakov said.

"The information of Interfax agency on confirmation by Basayev the death of Dudayev is lie," Deputy

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Minister said. He refuted the information about death of Khamad Gurbanov, former representative of Dudayev in Moscow. "Gurbanov is only wounded and presently his state is not so bad," Abdurzakov said.

Russia: Paper Suggests Dudayev Spirited Abroad, Not Dead

MM2504081596 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 25 Apr 96 p 1

[Report by Sergey Frolov under the "Version" rubric: "Pilot Dudayev's Silent Spin"]

[FBIS Translated Text] One aspect of the historic TASS item about Dudayev's death makes you wonder: The news was given to the correspondent by Khozh-Akhmed Yarikanov, one of the people closest to the general. Is it not strange that the Chechens, who have been hiding their losses in the war with all their might, are suddenly in a hurry to surrender the "deceased number one"? On the contrary, if he has died, Dudayev's retinue should keep the myth about the "slippery Joe" going for another several months, in order to trick their people and inspire them to fight against the "aggressor."

And why is the "devout Muslim" Dudayev not to be buried by sunset on the day of his death, as the Koran stipulates, and not in his native village of Yalkhari, as befits a Chechen, but in Shalazhi, where anti-Dudaeyev moods have reigned. Add to this the lack of any identification of the body (although if you wanted to you could find one that looked more or less like Dudayev among the corpses left after the missile attack). Most probably we are dealing with a magnificently organized operation to take the general everyone is sick of out of the game. Analysts have already put forward conjectures about a possible "Gamsakhurdia-style" departure — by means of a mysterious death and a hasty burial. According to the logic of events, it is a pointless and futile proposition to carry on the war: If the Communists come to power, they will weaken the power of the secret Kremlin sponsors of Ichkeria, and the Army's hands will finally be untied, which will lead to its disappearance altogether. The notorious independence is also a knife at the Chechens' throat. In the event of real isolation, the impoverished, destroyed republic with its enormous number of people who have become unaccustomed to honest labor will scarcely last for more than a month. It would be far more convenient to reestablish former ties and suck financial juices out of Russia.

Most likely these arguments plus a substantial sum in severance pay were offered to the general to save his honor and to save the face of those who have been pretty well stung in the war. They will evidently bury something resembling Dudayev's body in Shalazhi. His "grave" will be turned into a place of worship, and the "deceased" himself has, it seems to me, no doubt already been dispatched across the border — he will not be left homeless: According to information from the anti-Dudayev opposition, a villa in the Hague was bought in his name back in 1992. And given the financial scale of Dudayev's criminal regime, plenty of acquisitions like this were made. If the general is alive, he can expect a peaceful and affluent old age (true, he will have to shave off his mustache), and new, more amenable leaders will appear in Chechnya who will reach compromise with Moscow.

Whether Dudayev is alive or not, he has departed from the political scene. The war will gradually come to an end, although "die-hard" individual gunmen will still give the authorities trouble. Huge sums of money will be poured into the republic for restoration purposes, eclipsing previous income from oil and bank advice notes. Everyone will be among their own people, apart from the dead Russian soldiers and Chechens.

Russia: Duma Security Chief Doubts Dudayev Death Reports

LD2404193596 Moscow Radiostantsiya Ekho Moskvy in Russian 1500 GMT 24 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The head of the State Duma Security Committee, Viktor Ilyukhin, doubts whether Dzhokhar Dudayev is dead.

[begin Ilyukhin recording] I shall believe that Dudayev is dead only when a forensic medical test has been carried out. This is not a simple occasion. Proceedings have been instituted against Dudayev and he is accused of committing the most serious crimes. Announcements of Dudayev's death could be made with various aims in mind, especially if he is not dead. First, to avoid talks on a peaceful settlement in Chechnya. Second, if Dudayev has realized that armed resistance against the federal troops is pointless he will, no doubt, take all possible measures to go abroad to hide. [end recording]

Russia: Doubts About Dudayev's Death Summarized

MM2404193296 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 25 Apr 96 pp 1, 2

[Roundup of reports by Elmar Guseynov, Aleksandr Dzyublo, Sergey Leskov, Viktor Litovkin, Grigoriy Punanov, Yuriy Senatorov, and Yuriy Snegirev: "With or Without Dudayev, the War Must Be Ended"]

[FBIS Translated Text] For 48 hours people in Russia and around the world have been discussing the report of the death of Dzhokhar Dudayev, president of the

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nonrecognized Republic of Ichkeria. Despite the fact that the government of Ichkeria has already twice confirmed the fact of his death near the village of Gekhi-Chu on the night of 21-22 April, at the time that this issue was signed to press there were no irrefutable proofs of this. Hence at this present moment any of the versions might be viewed as....

Confirmations and Doubts

The Main Intelligence Directorate Knows More Than It Is Saying...

The General Staff Main Intelligence Directorate hinted to IZVESTIYA that Dudayev's death is an established fact, but did not say whether their people had anything to do with it.

Here we see the operation of the professional rule that until the corpse is discovered and identified, any commentaries or riddling over the tea leaves is inappropriate.

Yandarbiyev Has Confirmed Dudayev's Death in Writing...

An official source in Groznyy's mission to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe [OSCE] told an ITAR-TASS corespondent that the mission had received written notification of Dzhokhar Dudayev's death. In the words of the source, the letter was signed by Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev, who occupied the post of vice president in Dudayev's regime.

...And Basayev Has Confirmed It Orally

Speaking late on Tuesday evening on a TV channel received in the mountainous and surrounding regions of Chechnya, Shamil Basayev said that Vice President Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev had assumed the duties of acting president of the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria, INTERFAX reports.

Basayev also stated that a three-day period of mourning is being declared in Chechnya in connection with Dudayev's death.

Gennadiy Seleznev Claims That His Adviser Was Promised a Meeting With Dzhokhar Dudayev

Anatoliy Denisov, adviser to the chairman of the Russian Federation State Duma chairman, was today promised a meeting with Dzhokhar Dudayev, Gennadiy Seleznev stated. The speaker clarified that Denisov was promised this meeting by Dudayev's entourage yesterday, but it was later postponed to today. Gennadiy Seleznev himself considers the report of Dudayev's death to be untrue. "This is Dudayev's third death this year," the State Duma chairman recalled.

The Kremlin Does Not Rule Out Disinformation

V. Klimenko, leader of the apparatus of the president's national security adviser and also E. Pain's deputy in the working commission on Chechnya, told IZVESTIYA's correspondent that the special services, and also military intelligence, are not for the time being confirming Dudayev's death in reports sent to the Kremlin. (According to our information, the president receives reports from the FSB [Federal Security Service], the Defense Ministry, the MVD [Ministry of Internal Affairs], the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and other services.) At the same time, the Army command confirms that missile bombardment of the area where the leader of the Chechen separatists was allegedly located at the time did take place. The military claim that they were shelling an area of guerrilla concentration. They had not received any information that Dudayev was there at this time. The story that the long hunt for him has finally been crowned with success so far looks unconvincing.

V. Klimenko explained in this connection that repeated attempts to establish the whereabouts of the leader of the Chechen gunmen had, as a rule, proved unsuccessful because he never stayed in one place for more than two hours. Information about his excursions to various population centers as a rule reached field commanders too late. In his opinion, it is theoretically possible to have calculated the so-called "antenna range" within which Dudayev could have established satellite communications while in Urus-Martanovskiy Rayon. Hence the probability of his death during the missile attack cannot be entirely ruled out. At the same time, this story could have been released by Dudayev's propaganda machine, since considerable advantage was to be gained from this version, which could influence the political situation in the republic in the separatists' favor.

How This Could Have Happened

Dudayev Was Intending to Speak With Representatives of the King of Morocco

According to information received by us from close friends of Dzhokhar Dudayev in Moscow, the area of the village of Gekhi-Chu was the location of the Dudayevites' permanent satellite communications center. The president of Ichkeria regularly came to this place for important telephone conversations.

According to unconfirmed reports, on this occasion he had come there in order to hold talks with representatives of King Hassan II of Morocco, whom Dudayev himself had named as a possible candidate for mediator in talks with the Kremlin.

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Officials in the Moroccan embassy stated that they know nothing of such a telephone conversation, that they have had no direct contacts with Dudayev, and are themselves waiting for information and explanations from Marrakech.

Tracing Dudayev's Radio Transmission Point Was Not a Technical, but a Commercial Question

According to available information, the Chechen leader used a radio network of the Western satellite system INMARSAT. It operates on the 1.5-1.6 gigahertz frequency. At such frequencies the radio frequency beam is extremely narrow, and it is very difficult to pick it up, unlike emissions from ordinary radio stations. The frequency on which Dudayev conducted his talks was no secret to our special services; only quite recently, according to Ministry of Communications specialists, his conversation with Konstantin Borov was traced.

L. Pchelyakov, deputy general director of "Morsvyazsputnik," the only organization in Russia (apart from Dudayev's) which operates with the INMARSAT system, put forward the hypothesis that the time required to identify coordinates is 20 minutes. A. Vyshlov, chief of the technical center of the "Satellite Communications" state enterprise, believes that the task can be achieved within minutes. The technical feasibility of the task is confirmed by engineers of the military space forces. Satellite systems that relay not only the source's vocal message, but also his coordinates, have already been receive practical development.

According to the general opinion, identifying the coordinates of Dudayev's mobile telephone was not so much a technical problem as a financial problem. It is necessary to develop a network of ground-based tracking stations and to carry out a patient search for the necessary wavelength. However, specialists do not understand why it was necessary to go into open country to organize a link-up, as was indicated in the early reports of Dudayev's death. INMARSAT is just as effective indoors, as Dudayev's skilled (you have to be to cope with satellite communications) engineers must know. This detail puts in question the story that the missile strike was launched against the Chechen leader while he was engaged in conversation.

An Aviation or an Artillery Strike?

Colonel General Petr Deynekin, commander in chief of the Russian Air Force, in conversation with IZVESTIYA's correspondent decisively rejected the theory that the missile strike on the environs of the village of Gekhi-Chu was inflicted by his airmen.

At the same time, according to ITAR-TASS' information, a highly placed source in the headquarters of the federal forces grouping in the Chechen Republic reported by telephone from Khankaly (a suburb of Groznyy) that on the night of 21-22 April in the region of the village of Gekhi-Chu aircraft were "operating in fighter sweep configuration." Missile installations in this region were not activated. The source left unanswered the news agency correspondent's question as to whether the death of the Chechen separatist leader could have been a consequence of the aircraft's "fighter sweep."

Our sources in the Russian Defense Ministry also have difficulty answering the question as to whether regular Russian Army units had anything to do with Dudayev's death. As of 1300 hours Moscow time on 24 April they still had no reliable information on this point. The military claim that the answer to this question should be sought from the special services.

What Now?

B. Yeltsin: "It Was He Who Wanted War..."

"With or without Dudayev, we will end the war in Chechnya." Russian President Boris Yeltsin made this statement in an interview with INTERFAX correspondent Vyacheslav Terekhov and ITAR-TASS correspondent Andrey Shtorkh in Khabarovsk on Wednesday, commenting on the mass media reports of the possible death of Dzhokhar Dudayev.

"We are verifying this information, but I wish to stress that it was Dudayev who launched the war. It was he who wanted war," the president noted.

"With or without Dudayev," the Boris Yeltsin stressed again, "we will bring peace to Chechnya. There will be no war there."

"If the man has been killed, then what..." After a short pause the president added: "We must be careful in case the gunmen step up operations without him."

Will the File on the General Be Closed?

Our correspondent was formed in the Russian General Prosecutor's Office that criminal proceedings against Dzhokhar Dudayev and the search for him will be dropped only if his death is confirmed by incontestable proofs. Dudayev has been wanted by the police since 1 February of last year, when former acting General Prosecutor Aleksey Ilyushenko authorized a ruling confining him to custody.

Sources in the Russian MVD claim that the identification of the corpse of D. Dudayev, who is wanted throughout Russia, will not take place in the near future. This is connected with the fact that the body,

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so the Chechen separatists claim, is situated in territory not under the control of federal forces, and sending an investigative group to the spot is simply impossible. Moreover, the MVD does not possess verification of Dudayev's death. "If this is not a trick, the Dudayevites would invite some Chechen Republic officials, and definitely some journalists, to the funeral," a highly placed officer in the Russian Federation MVD told IZVESTIYA's correspondent in a telephone conversation.

Conflicting Reports on the Time and Place of the Funeral

INTERFAX's Chechen source in Groznyy expressed surprise in connection with reports that Dzhokhar Dudayev's funeral, according to a widespread rumor, will take place in the village of Shalazhi (Southeast Chechnya, 10 km from Gekhi-Chu). In his words, Shalazhi's inhabitants have traditionally taken an anti-Dudayev line.

The source draw attention to the fact that, according to tradition, the body of someone who has died or who has been killed is buried at the cemetery of his birthplace. Dzh. Dudayev himself was born in the village of Yalkhari in Galanchozhskiy Rayon.

According to Muslim traditions, someone who has been killed is buried either on the same day before sunset, or on the following day, that is to say (if the reports of Dudayev's death are true) — on Tuesday.

Meanwhile, reports have appeared of plans to bury Dzh. Dudayev on Wednesday; but this would be a breach of tradition, the source noted.

Damir Gizatullin, deputy mufti of the Ecclesiastical Administration of Muslims of Central Russia, told IZVESTIYA's correspondent that if "Mr. President Dzhokhar Dudayev" was indeed killed on the night of 21-22 April, according to Muslim custom his body should be committed to the ground at twilight on the same day, before the moment that the sun shows itself "two vershki" (about 9 cm) above the ground. In the most extreme case, it is permitted to hold the obsequies on the following evening.

If his burial took place at a Muslim cemetery, the corpse should not be exhumed and conveyed to the cemetery of his birthplace. However, this does not apply to the burial of Muslims in the cemeteries of other creeds — the deceased must definitely lie with his brothers in the faith.

There Is No Alarm in Moscow, but...

Special security measures in Moscow in connection with the reports of Dzhokhar Dudayev's death in Chechnya "are not being adopted at the moment." INTERFAX was informed of this on the morning of 24 April by Major General Nikolay Kulikov, chief of the capital's Main Internal Affairs Administration. Nevertheless, he did not rule out that such measures could be taken later.

The Moscow police have frequently been placed on alert [usilennyy rezhim neseniya sluzhby] since the beginning of active military operations in Chechnya at the end of 1994.

No additional measures for patrolling the streets of Moscow will be undertaken by the public safety police either. IZVESTIYA was informed of this by German Layevskiy, deputy leader of the Main Internal Affairs Administration's public safety police. In his words, the entire Moscow police force is today more focused on maintaining the security and tranquillity of citizens during the forthcoming May holidays, and is also perfecting the tactics and strategy of its work in the period of the presidential elections.

Mikhail Doronin, deputy chief of the Russian MVD Information Administration, told IZVESTIYA that "the death of Dudayev is no great calamity for us," and no special security measures will be taken across the country. "What is already being done is entirely sufficient to maintain order in Russia," Doronin added.

The Situation in Groznyy

The situation in Groznyy is on the whole stable, a source in the Chechen capital informed IZVESTIYA by telephone 24 April. "No one has reacted to anything here for a long time," the source said, noting that following the announcement of Dudayev's death "the night passed peacefully, and there was actually less firing than usual." Nevertheless, according to IZVESTIYA's information, the federal forces and the local law enforcement organs have stepped up security measures.

Russia: Dudayev's Brother Confirms Leader's Death

LD2404191096 Moscow NTV in Russian 1800 GMT 24 Apr 96

[From the "Segodnya" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] We have just received pictures filmed in Chechnya. [Dzhokhar] Dudayev's death was confirmed by his brother, Maskhad. He is speaking about the forthcoming mourning ceremonies.

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[begin recording] [M. Dudayev] This could last a fortnight, people will come and we have to meet them and receive their condolences, see them out.

[Correspondent] So people come to you, do they?

[Dudayev] People gathered to pay their condolences, there'll be even more tomorrow. [end recording]

Russia: Chechen Muslim Elders Acknowledge Dudayev's Death

LD2404165696 Moscow INFORMATSIONNOYE AGENTSTVO EKHO MOSKVY in Russian 1640 GMT 24 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] In accordance with Chechen tradition, the elders announced the death of Dzhokhar Dudayev this evening, Ikhvan Gerikhanov, chairman [title as heard] of the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Ichkeria, said in an interview with Ekho Moskvy radio station.

He stressed that "among Muslims, this is the sole official acknowledgement of the fact of death."

Russia: Interior Minister Confirms Dudayev Killed

LD2504112796 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1118 GMT 25 Apr 96

[By Narmin Shiraliyeva]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW April 25 (Itar-Tass) — Russian Interior minister Anatoliy Kulikov confirmed on Thursday that Chechen separatist leader Dzhokhar Dudayev had been killed.

"The fact of the death of Dzhokhar Dudayev is being confirmed by the information available for the current moment", Kulikov told reporters in what was the first official confirmation of the reports about Dudayev's death from a top Russian official.

Kulikov refused to predict future developments in Chechnya, but said the military would like to end the war.

"It is difficult to make any long-term predictions about the situation in Chechnya, but the most desirable for the military will be the cessation of combat activities", the minister said.

He added that law enforcement officers were "taking all efforts to avert an aggravation of the situation in Chechnya in the coming holidays in May".

In May Russians will celebrate the May 1 holiday and the May 9 Victory Day in World War Two.

Russia: Circumstances of Dudayev's Death Detailed

LD2404182796 Moscow NTV in Russian 1500 GMT 24 Apr 96

[From the "Segodnya" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] This afternoon our special correspondents managed to visit the place where all these events unfolded, where, as has been reported, Dudayev was killed. Our correspondent Andrey Cherkassov is on the telephone now. He is in the settlement of Gekhi-Chu, where these events took place.

[Cherkassov] Three days of mourning have been declared in Chechnya. [passage omitted] Many people did not want to believe that the first president of Ichkeria was dead.

In an exclusive interview to NTV Television, Akhmed Zakayev, a member of the Dudayev government and commander of the first sector of the south-west front, confirmed the reports of the death of Dzhokhar Dudayev. Vice President Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev was appointed president at a sitting of the defense council held last night. As Zakayev said, the killing of Dudayev has wiped out all imminent prospects for a peaceful settlement. After the death of their leader, the idea of independence has only been reinforced among the fighters. The war, already distinguished by its fierceness, could now assume a most savage character. [passage omitted]

By agreement in advance, and after waiting for several hours, we were taken to the place where Dudayev died, which is on the outskirts of the village of Gekhi-Chu. The picture we saw testifies quite clearly that Dudayev's death was the result of a special operation. There was no mass shelling of the village that evening, as the federal command states. At exactly 2000 [1600 GMT] just two mighty explosions rang out. The first bomb fell precisely on target — the Niva car which Dudayev was standing next to. He was speaking over a satellite telephone to a Russian politician. Death was instantaneous. According to those of his entourage who survived, his body was cut to pieces by splinters, which mutilated the back of his head and face, tore off his left arm and shattered the bones of his right leg.

We did not see Dudayev's body, but there is virtually no doubt that he is dead. The Chechen general's body has been hidden, and its whereabouts are a strict secret.

Russia: Kovalev: Dudayev's Death Removes Doubts About Zavgayev

LD2504110196 Moscow INTERFAX in English 0917 GMT 25 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] GROZNYY, April 25 (Interfax) — Russian Justice Minister Valentin Kovalev said

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that "all doubts regarding the legitimacy of the power of Doku Zavgayev as head of the Chechen Republic have been removed after the death of Chechen separatist leader Dzhokhar Dudayev."

"Now this is the single legitimate power in Chechnya," he told Interfax on Thursday.

The negotiating process with field commanders will be continued and "will be focused in the framework of Chechnya's leadership as a participant in these negotiations," he said, referring to Zavgayev's Moscow-backed administration.

Kovalev said that the criminal proceedings instituted against Dzhokhar Dudayev will not be dropped until his corpse has been identified.

Russia: Yandarbiyev Gives First Interview as Dudayev Successor

LD2404181096 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1616 GMT 24 Apr 96

[By Sharip Asuyev]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] GROZNYY April 24 (Itar-Tass) — Chechen separatist leader Dzhokhar Dudayev's successor Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev, who has proclaimed himself Chechnya's acting president, premier and commander-in-chief after Dudayev's death, pledged to continue his fight for independence.

"The fact of the tragic death of the first president of Chechnya has not broken the Chechen people and they are ready to continue the fight for independence which began under the leadership of Dzhokhar Dudayev", Yandarbiyev told Itar-Tass on Wednesday in his first interview in the new capacity.

In the first half of the day, Yandarbiyev attended a memorial ceremony for Dudayev. The ceremony was held in the yard of Dudayev's cousin in the village of Shalagi, 40 kilometres southwest of Groznyy, and will continue for three days.

The ceremony itself and the statements made by its participants do not leave any doubt that Dudayev is dead. However, the place where he was reportedly buried late on April 23, with only close relatives in attendance, is kept secret.

Yandarbiyev said the "time and place of Dzhokhar Dudayev's burial will be decided by Dudayev's family in accordance with the traditions. But they have decided not to disclose this information."

However, he noted that Dudayev was buried "in one of the rural cemeteries in southern Chechnya."

According to Yandarbiyev, Dudayev had been hit by a shell fragment in the back of his head and died in the hands of Musa Idigov who was his bodyguard and relative. Before his died, Dudayev urged his supporters and followers in the Chechen language "not to give up ous cause and bring it to the end."

Yandarbiyev confirmed that on April 23 an extraordinary session of the "state defence committee of Chechnya was held with the participation of members of the cabinet of ministers and the parliament of the republic." In its resolution it said that "in connection with the state of emergency caused by the death of the president of the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria, Dzhokhar Dudayev, and in accordance with the constitution of the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria, the functions of president, prime minister and commander-in-chief will be transferred to the vice-president."

The resolution was signed by 15 people, including field commanders Shamil Basayev, Ruslan Gelayev and Akhmed Zakayev.

Five members of the state defence committee, including Chechen military chief Aslan Maskhadov and separatist government spokesman Movladi Udugov, could not arrive for technical reasons. However, they supported the resolution verbally, he added.

Yandarbiyev said that Dudayev's supporters "recognise their obligation, to the memory of Dzhokhar Dudayev, for a proper continuation of the fight for the Fatherland."

He pointed out that no radical changes will occur in the policy or leadership of his government.

Speaking about talks with Moscow, Yandarbiyev noted that "I favoured and still favour a peaceful settlement of the crisis in Chechnya," adding that the question of talks with Russia will be considered specifically only "after an investigation of who and when planned the terrorist act against Dudayev."

Local residents showed Itar-Tass correspondent the place near the village of Gekhi-Chu where Dudayev and two of his men had been killed and the holes left by missiles or guided shells on the mountain side about 1.5 kilometres from the village. There are also the remains of a Niva car in which Dudayev had driven to the outskirts of the village for a satellite communications session.

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Russia: Dudayev Successor Yandarbiyev Said Seriously Wounded

LD2404181396 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1600 GMT 24 Apr 96

[Video report by correspondent A. Zotov in Chechnya, including recorded remarks by unidentified member of Dudayev presidential guard, and by Akhmed Zakayev, commander of the Dudayev formations in the first sector of the southwestern front; from the "Vesti" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] Apparently, Dudayev has been buried somewhere near the village of Shalazhi. Our correspondent went there this morning.

[Zotov] There was nothing in the village of Shalazhi of the Urus-Martan district today to indicate any preparations for the impending burial of Dzhokhar Dudayev. Moreover, it seems the very place of the burial will be kept secret.

[Unidentified member Dudayev's presidential guard] Dzhokhar Dudayev has been buried. However, not a single person will know the place of his burial. Even his own brother does not know where he is buried. Only one or two or his closest comrades-in-arms will know.

[Zotov] Also today, Akhmed Zakayev, commander of the Dudayev formations in the first sector of the southwestern front, read out an official statement.

[Zakayev] A government announcement. It is with deep sorrow that the Government of the Chechen Republic, Ichkeria informs the people of the Chechen Republic, Ichkeria, and the world community, that Dzhokhar Dudayev, the first president of the Chechen Republic — Ichkeria — died on the night of 21 April 1996.

[Zotov] Zakayev also confirmed that all power has been handed over to Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev, former vice president of the Dudayev government. Yusup Ilmurzayev, head of the administration of the Urus-Martan district, said Dudayev's successor, Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev, is seriously wounded and certainly cannot lead the Dudayevites. There will probably be a struggle for power among the Dudayevites, which might undermine the peace process in the republic. Today, all of Dudayev's sympathizers were keeping their gates open to make the grief go away, according to the national custom, and expressing condolences to each other. [video shows a Chechen village, its inhabitants, Chechen official, and field commander reading the statement]

Russia: Tatar President Quits Mediator Mission After Dudayev Death

LD2504122196 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1141 GMT 25 Apr 96

[By Nikolay Sorokin]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] KAZAN April 25 (Itar-Tass) — President of the Russian Muslim republic of Tatarstan Mintimer Shaymiyev, who was named by the Russian President as a possible intermediary at talks with Chechen separatist leader Dzhokhar Dudayev, said on Thursday he was quitting his mission as Dudayev had been killed.

"In the given situation there is no necessity to continue the separate mission in the quality of an intermediary at the talks on the settlement of the Chechen crisis", Shaymiyev told Tass, but added that he would continue to work in the state commission on the Chechen settlement which is headed by Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin.

Shaymiyev recalled that he had agreed to act as an intermediary at the request of President Boris Yeltsin and also because "an important factor was that Dudayev positively regarded my candidacy" as a mediator.

At the same time, the president of Tatarstan believes efforts should be continued to promote talks with the separatists.

"Despite the possible aggravation of the situation it is necessary to carry out the complex of measures to settle the conflict according to the (peace) programme of the Russian president", Shaymiyev said.

"It is necessary to hold talks with field commanders. If not now, than later", Shaymiyev said and named Chechen chief of staff Aslan Maskhadov as the best partner for a constructive dialogue.

The president expressed regret over Dudayev's death saying that "If life given by Allah is cut short, this is always a tragedy".

Russia: Grachev Complains of Being 'Misrepresented' on Chechnya

MM2504113996 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 25 Apr 96 p 1

[Report by Captain First Rank Vladimir Kuzar and Colonel Valeriy Usoltsev: "Russian President and Russian Federation Defense Minister Visit Khabarovsk En Route to Beijing"]

[FBIS Translated Text] In Khabarovsk Russian Federation President Boris Yeltsin met with kray leaders

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and Far East Military District commanders. Boris Nikolayevich inspected a bridge under construction over the Amur, laid flowers at the Eternal Flame on Ploshchad Slavy [Square of Glory], and spoke to the people of Khabarovsk 24 April.

Army General Pavel Grachev, Russian defense minister, had arrived in Khabarovsk a day earlier. He heard from the district command and visited certain Far East Military District units. The defense minister was pleased with the progress of combat training and the state of the Far Easterners' troop discipline and combat training.

The Far East Military District has merited a good grade in terms of the results of combat training over the winter period, Army Gen. Pavel Grachev said.

Speaking about the combat readiness of the Air Force and Air Defense Armies stationed in the Far East, Pavel Grachev voiced a positive opinion of their combat readiness. In response to questions from journalists the defense minister remarked that the official visit to China is seen as a further move toward strengthening cooperation with colleagues in that fraternal country. He also said that Russia is ready to carry on selling arms to China.

Touching on the Chechnya problem during a conversation with mass media representatives, Pavel Sergeyevich expressed regret that his position had been misrepresented by Mr. Kiselev during the latest "Itogi" television program. He said that the troops' withdrawal from that republic was taking place in line with the plan approved by the president and in accordance with the developing situation there.

Russia: Yeltsin Agrees To Finance Chechen Reconstruction

LD2404175296 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1558 GMT 24 Apr 96

[From the "Presidential Bulletin" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Russian President Boris Yeltsin vowed to end the war in Chechnya peacefully, when commenting on the reports about the presumed death of Chechen separatist leader Dzhokhar Dudayev.

"With or without Dudayev we shall end everything in peace in Chechnya," he told Interfax correspondent Vyacheslav Terekhov.

"We are checking these reports. But I would like to emphasize that it was Dudayev who unleashed the war. It was he who wanted war," said Yeltsin.

"We urged him to sit down at a negotiating table on many occasions. We needed to start talks to settle the conflict peacefully. All in vain. With or without Dudayev," Yeltsin said. "We shall end everything in peace. There will be no war in Chechnya." IF Note: Chechen rebel commander Shamil Basayev confirmed the reports about Dudayev's death.

Vice President Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev assumed the powers of president of the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria, he said, speaking on the TV channel received in the foothills and mountains.

Basayev also announced three days of mourning in the wake of Dudayev's death.

A top official at the Russian federal command headquarters confirmed the reports of Dudayev's death as a result of an air strike on the village Gekhi-Chu in the night of April 21. Air force headquarters told Interfax that "there is as yet no documentary evidence of Dudayev's death." However, it said that "military channels are confirming the reports."

Meanwhile, Yeltsin decreed on financing the economic and social restoration of Chechnya and measures for monitoring these allocations, the presidential press service reported Wednesday.

The restorations will be financed under a 1996 federal program in the Chechen cities and villages "which have legitimate bodies of power and can efficiently use the allocations," the press service cited the decree.

"The money shall be allocated by the Russian Ministry of Finance through the government of Chechnya, the general contractor of the federal restoration program, on the basis of the financial limits set by the state commission for Chechnya settlement, and monthly payment schedules approved by the head of Chechnya," says the presidential plan.

The Russian Central Bank is instructed to reorganize Chechnya's banking system, while the Russian government to outline areas to finance within a month. The restorations will be financed with a $1 billion credit line to be opened in 1996.

The president called for preferential conditions for Russian and foreign investors who participate in the reconstruction of Chechnya. A legislative initiative to this effect will be prepared by governments of Russia and Chechnya.

The Russian Taxation Service and the commission for Chechnya settlement led by Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin shall supervise the use of allocations.

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Economic Issues

Russia: Comptroller Cited on Budget Revenue Shortfall

MM2404141896 Moscow FINANSOVYYE IZVESTIYA in Russian 23 Apr 96 p 2

[Report by Yevgeniy Vasilchuk and Yevgeniya Pismennaya: "Country in Budget Knockdown" — received via Internet]

[FBIS Translated Text] The forecasts of experts who claimed that the early adoption of the law "On the Federal Budget for 1996" would by no means solve all our financial problems this year are starting to come true.

Tax receipts to the federal budget in the first quarter, according to Finance Ministry figures, came to just 56 percent of the planned level. Federal budget expenditure was 71-percent funded, and the budget deficit grew by 50 percent.

Having examined budget execution, the Federation Council concluded that this situation has come about as a result of the implementation of a budgetary policy that is not geared to the utilization of methods involving state incentives for the development of society's production potential. Upper house deputies stressed that the lack of any coordination between the work of tax, customs, and financial organs, foreign-exchange control organs, or the Central Bank to shape the revenue side of budgets at all levels had also had a negative impact. And the unsatisfactory execution of the expenditure side is due to the reduction of the financial base as a result of a failure by taxpayers to meet their commitments to the budget, to the lack of controls over the targeted utilization of budget funds, and to the rationalization of the structure of budget expenditure.

According to operational information from the Comptroller's Office, in the first quarter federal budget revenue came to 62.6 trillion rubles [R], or 18 percent of the annual budget. Revenue came to 12.3 percent of GDP as opposed to the 15.1 percent laid down in the 1996 budget. Profits tax revenue, which on the basis of the corresponding annual budget indicators came to just 14.7 and 18.8 percent, is not being ensured. This is despite the fact that the draft federal law "On Changes to the Federal Law 'On the Federal Budget for 1996'" specifies the figures of 20.3 and 21.9 percent respectively. On the the whole tax revenue has been running at 18.5 percent of the annual indicator, which is less than the 21.3 percent proposed by the draft law.

Total deferred accounts payable to suppliers and to the federal and local budgets in late January came to R262 trillion, including R67 trillion owed to budgets. Quarterly growth in debts to budgets is running at R15-18 trillion, of which R8-10 trillion is owed to the federal budget.

The federal budget shortfall had reached R41 trillion by 1 March. Although total deferred payments to the federal budget were down almost R4 trillion, the scale of the deferments allowed comes to one-third of the total shortfall — at R13.5 trillion. And total payment deferments allowed by the Finance Ministry in February increased by R1.1 trillion, or 120 percent. Moreover, deferred payments under treasury tax exemptions come to almost R1 trillion.

In the first quarter of 1996 nontax revenue received by the federal budget amounted to 18 percent of the budget appropriations ratified for the year, as against the figure of 15.6 percent used in the draft quarterly breakdown.

According to preliminary estimates by Comptroller's Office specialists, deficit funding sources had produced R28.1 trillion in the first quarter, compared to the figure of 18.7 trillion used in budget projections. On this basis, funds of R90.7 trillion could be used to finance expenditure. And the excess of funding sources over funded expenditure could come to R16.7 trillion.

Apart from the problems with executing the budget and the search for those at fault at all levels of power, precise figures for federal budget revenue are still unclear. According to operational Comptroller's Office information obtained from the State Tax Service and Customs Committee report, budget revenue differs substantially from the Finance Ministry figures. Thus, according to the Finance Ministry figures, federal budget revenue in the first quarter was R35.2 trillion, while according to the State Tax Service and State Customs Committee figures it was R55.6 trillion.

Given the catastrophic underfunding of the expenditure ratified by the law on the "Federal Budget for 1996," decisions are constantly being made to fund expenditure that was not provided for in the budget. The State Duma has already drawn up a deputies' query to the premier on the decisions which have led to the reduction in federal budget revenue this year, on the sources of the funds used to provide investment tax loans to organizations located in Novorossiysk and to defense-industry enterprises in Sverdlovsk Oblast, on the amounts of government guarantees and undertakings given to recipients of budget funds in respect of private-sector bank loans taken out by those same recipients of federal budget funds, and on the budget headings under which such guarantees were provided.

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Federal Budget Execution in First Quarter of 1996
(trillions of rubles)

	First-Quarter plan	Outturn:	
		Finance Ministry figures	Comptroller's Office figures
REVENUE, total	71.3	48.7	62.6
Income tax	1.2	1.0	1.2
Excise duty	9.2	3.8	9.1
Foreign trade taxes	7.3	6.7	6.6
Nontax revenue, total	6.2	8.7	7.2
of which			
Revenue from foreign economic activity	2.5	4.7	3.9
EXPENDITURE, total	90.0	69.8	74.0
of which:			
State administration	1.9	1.8	1.8
International activity	6.4	3.7	5.6
National defense	17.6	13.9	13.5
Law-enforcement activity	7.8	8.1	6.6
Science	2.7	1.4	1.4
Industry and construction	7.7	3.7	3.5
Agriculture	2.9	2.6	2.7
Social and cultural measures	8.8	5.8	5.2
Servicing of state debt	12.4	7.2	10.3
DEFICIT	18.7	21.0	11.4
Sources for covering the deficit	18.7	21.0	28.1
total of which:			
Sales of securities	10.0	15.0	[blank]
Foreign borrowings	8.8	5.3	[blank]

Source: Finance Ministry and the Russian Federation Comptroller's Office.

Russia: Declining Quality, Short Supply May Force Grain Imports

MK2404124996 Moscow MOSKOVSKIY KOMSOMOLETS in Russian 24 Apr 96 p 3

[Unattributed report: "It's Growing Harder To Separate the Wheat From the Chaff"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The falling quality of grain could leave Russia without its own grain! It will be necessary to import almost 5 million tonnes of wheat

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before the new crop is in. According to Anatoliy Altukhov, section head at the All-Russia Scientific Research Institute of the Economy of Agriculture, it will hardly be possible to replenish the country's food fund relying on Russian producers. The farms' grain stocks are very small — 3 to 4 million tonnes in all, plus a couple of million in grain elevators. This is a paltry amount for a country like Russia, with part of the grain being of very low quality at that.

Citing figures of the State Grain Inspectorate under the Russian Federation Government, the researcher noted that losses of grain in Russian doubled or trebled in recent years. In his words, this was caused by the fact that many farms cannot afford the high cost of grain elevators' services. Therefore, to save money, they rot the grain in less costly premises unsuitable for [grain] storage. Last year Russia purchased less than half the grain it did in 1990. Notably, it is purchases of precisely the high-class grain for making bread that declined the most. The agrarians can of course beat their breast trying to prove to the people around them that Russia uses its own grain to bake bread. But when they try to feed people in Russia with bare promises instead of flour and bread, it's no time for conceit!

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International Affairs

Ukraine: Kuchma Addresses European Assembly

LD2404120096 Kiev UT-1 Television Network in Ukrainian 1835 GMT 23 Apr 96

[Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma speech at the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly in Strasbourg on 23 April—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] Esteemed chairwoman, esteemed parliamentarians, ladies and gentlemen: First of all, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the Parliamentary Assembly and to chairwoman Leni Fischer for the invitation to address this authoritative forum.

I link the granting of this possibility, in the first instance, to Ukraine's accession as a fully-fledged member of the Council of Europe. We are grateful to all those parliamentarians of the Assembly who supported Ukraine last year and also its aspirations to join the family of European democratic states. At the same time, we realize that your support is a manifestation of your utmost trust in us, in the state's leadership, and in the Ukrainian people, who firmly and decisively embarked on the path of reforms and on the path of democratic transformations. We also understand that your faith is a large measure of our responsibility to ensure the irreversible nature of Ukraine's policy to transform the former totalitarian society into one that is democratic, open, and law-based. Our entry into democratic Europe, therefore, is an expression of the mutual nature of this trust and responsibility. We should all be aware of the fact that Ukraine was one of the last countries in Europe to rid itself of the colonial regime, and by joining other European nations that rejected communism, it made its final choice: independence, prosperity of the people, and creation of a society and state as a democratic system.

Ukraine's path to freedom and democracy through a modern constitutional process has lasted for almost five years. Its completion will dot the last i in Ukraine's choice in favor of freedom and democracy. This is precisely why it is taking so long. This is why it is being accompanied by political struggles between the forces that personify the totalitarian past and the democratic future. This is precisely why Ukraine is still probably the only country in central and eastern Europe that does not have a modern constitution. I, as head of the Ukrainian state, would like to assure this highly respected forum that I will personally do everything within my powers to ensure that the new Ukrainian constitution, as the fundamental law of freedom and democracy in Ukraine, is adopted in the near future.

The main task that is now before us, at a time when the draft constitution is being actively debated in parliament, is to ensure that the constitutional process ends in a democratic way. For over a year now, the president and the Supreme Council are persistently holding talks on the final version of the constitution. Our priority is not one of confrontation, but of a search for compromises. The immediate task is to ensure lawfulness and legitimacy as far as the adoption of the new constitution is concerned. I do not rule out that the Ukrainian people could have its say in the matter. We consider that precisely in this manner, through an agreement between the president and the parliament, and with the agreement of the people by means of a referendum, can we safeguard lawfulness and the highest legitimacy for the new Ukrainian constitution. If it takes place precisely in this way — and I stress that I will do everything possible to ensure that it does — then the Ukrainian people, almost 300 years after the first attempt to constitutionally secure Ukrainian statehood, undertaken by Pylyp Orlyk [Ukrainian Cossack leader] in 1710, will at last give its final consent to the constitutionally legalized progressive movement from the Kievan state of the 10th century to the modern Ukrainian state of the end of the 20th century. It is precisely in this way that the solid constitutional foundations of the Ukrainian path to real freedom and democratic will be laid.

The process of consolidating democratic transformations in Ukraine is taking place in conditions of an acute confrontation between political ideas. The situation is further complicated by considerable socioeconomic difficulties. The program of economic reforms launched in the autumn of 1994 is already showing its first positive results. The liberalization of economic relations is more clearly defined for Ukrainian society, and in 1995 noticeable trends toward economic stabilization appeared. The rate of decline in GDP slowed considerably. The rate of decline in output fell substantially. [word indistinct] of the processes of the restructuring of ownership and privatization. The rate of privatization increased several times. In the social sphere, for the first time in 1995, real salaries were increased. Owing to the consistent introduction of measures on market transformations, this year we are expecting growth in industrial and agricultural output. The government has largely mastered and is adopting real methods to regulate inflation. A tough monetary, credit, and budget policy is being pursued. We have launched a program of structural reconstruction of the economy.

Therefore, the process of reforming the economy is gaining momentum and is beginning to bear its first fruits, although a long and difficult road lies ahead of

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us. We are convinced, however, that we will overcome it. The readiness of leading European and world institutions, including the Council of Europe, the European Union, the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, and others, to render appropriate aid to Ukraine and to promote its participation in the process of reforming the common European economic area, also gives us additional strength and [word indistinct].

An important constituent part of Ukraine's transformation is reforming the legislative system and bringing it into line with European and world standards. Because of this need, in March this year we formed a state interdepartmental commission to introduce norms and standards of the Council of Europe into Ukrainian laws. Its main task is to ensure that Ukraine's obligations to the Council of Europe, as set out in resolution No. 190 of the Parliamentary Assembly, are fulfilled. The first point in the list of our obligations in terms of its position and its significance is the adoption of the new constitution. As I have already noted, we are very close to fulfilling this obligation within the time set out by the document.

With regard to the other obligations, then, it must honestly be said that they have not all been unequivocally accepted by sections of our society and by some political forces and state organizations. Above all, this concerns the abolition of the death penalty. Despite this, however, we understand that international legal obligations are such that they have to be fulfilled. As the saying goes, agreements are dearer than money. We will fulfill the agreements established between us. We highly appraise the European Union's contribution in promoting reforms in Ukraine through the implementation of the joint program of the Council of Europe and the Commission of European Communities, concluded on 9 November 1995, through the activity of the European Commission, Democracy Through Law, which, in the course of the last two years, at practically every one of its meetings, has considered the issue of the constitutional process in Ukraine. We intend to continue expanding our cooperation within the framework of the Council of Europe. Ukraine is already a signatory to almost 10 conventions of the Council of Europe and is getting ready to join another five this year, first and foremost, those that affect our participation in this organization. In addition, the issue of the ratification of the framework convention on the protection of national minorities was signed by Ukraine on 15 September 1995.

Taking advantage of this occasion, I would like to express particular satisfaction with the fact that we have succeeded in drawing up this document within the framework of the Council of Europe. It is known that the appearance of pockets of instability in Europe are in one way or another connected with the problem of national minorities. Ukraine's policies and legislation in the area of safeguarding the rights of peoples who belong to ethnic minorities have been given a high international appraisal, including from the Council of Europe. It is precisely because of this that we do not have interethnic conflicts in our state. Equally important for us is the support of the Ukrainian community abroad. At the same time, we expect Ukrainian national minorities in all member states of the Council of Europe to be guaranteed conditions appropriate to the high standards in Europe.

I would like to say that one of the most acute humanitarian problems requiring resolution, which, in my opinion, needs the Council of Europe's serious attention as well as the attention of the whole international community, is the problem of resettling deported peoples who are returning to Ukraine: namely, the Crimean Tatars and others. So far, about 300,000 Crimean Tatars have already returned to Crimea. Twice that many are aspiring to return to their historical homeland from the CIS. To that figure we must add 17,000 Bulgarians and Armenians, 20,000 Greeks, and 15,000 Germans who were deported. With regard to this, I would like to stress that we do not bear moral responsibility for the crimes of the totalitarian regime against the representatives of these peoples, but we must overcome these difficulties on our own.

I will just give you one example: we need about $2 billion to resettle the deported peoples in accordance with a program approved by the government. Ukraine can only allot $100 million. For this reason, the process of returning deported peoples has, in effect, come to a halt. In order for Ukraine to resume the program, it urgently needs international aid and the efforts of the international community. We believe that with your help, we will not be left alone with this serious problem.

Ms. Chairwoman and Members of Parliament, following the declaration of its independence, Ukraine has been implementing a policy of fast integration into the European process and extended involvement in European and transatlantic organizations and structures. We are satisfied with the development of our relations with the European Union. Following a partnership and cooperation treaty between the European Union and Ukraine signed in 1994, our relations have been intensifying and acquiring an increasingly businesslike nature.

Our strategic aim is to become a full member of the European Union. In the near future, we aim at creating a free-trade zone with the European Union and acquiring associated membership in the EU. We

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expect the European Union to understand our internal problems and difficulties and support us, assist us in overcoming them. This is why I appeal to you, esteemed members for the European Union member states, to speed up ratification of the 1994 treaty on partnership and cooperation between Ukraine and the European Union by the parliaments of your countries. This will be another contribution, be it an indirect one, to strengthening democracy in our country.

Ukraine attaches special importance to the development of closer relations with the North Atlantic alliance and such a well-known European security body as the Western European Union. We are increasing our cooperation with NATO, particularly within the framework of the Partnership for Peace program, and working actively within the North Atlantic Cooperation Council. Analyzing the situation emerging in Europe today, we are seeking our own model of relations with NATO.

We believe that at the present stage, it would be worthwhile to revive the idea of creating a political and economic alliance in Central and Eastern Europe of countries wishing to integrate into European organizations. The establishment of a nuclear-free zone in this region would have a major stabilizing effect on the development of the European process in every aspect, including the politico-military one, which was discussed at the G-7 summit in Moscow.

Considering a European security model for the future, we must take into account the interests of nonaligned, neutral nations, such as Ukraine. The system of continental security is doomed to failure if they end up in the buffer gray area. We need to devise an effective mechanism to provide reliable security guarantees for the nonaligned nations. The role and place of Ukraine in Europe, whose neutral policy is an important factor in preventing the revival of bloc confrontation, require that Ukraine's security interests be considered as fully as possible.

I wish to stress that we do not oppose the idea of NATO's expansion to absorb peaceloving, democratic, law-governed states, but we see this expansion as a gradual, evolutionary, and open process, which would not recreate a confrontational situation. We see NATO's future in its gradual transformation from a purely defense-oriented alliance into a Euroatlantic security structure for all European countries.

Esteemed members of parliament, since Ukraine became independent, we have taken part in the Helsinki process, consistently upholding a stronger and greater role and impact by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe [OSCE], a unique tool for preventive diplomacy, settlement of crisis situations, and elimination of their aftermath. We cooperate with the OSCE on the issues which determine the extent of Crimean autonomy. This is a sign of our sincerity and openness and our desire to be more effective in countering separatist attempts in Crimea and abroad to artificially inflate externally imposed problems. The fact that such attempts continue to be made is evident from the recent groundless and irresponsible appeals, including those made to the Council of Europe, about the alleged absence of any autonomy rights in Crimea; and this is being said in the face of the proven fact that the powers of Crimean autonomy are probably the fullest, compared to other autonomous entities within unitary states.

Negotiations on Crimea's autonomous status are coming to successful completion, in accordance with active legislation and the Ukrainian constitution. I wish to assure you that Crimea will be definitely ensured and guaranteed autonomous status within the unitary Ukrainian state, whose territorial integrity must be preserved. I am sure that nobody in Europe is keen to see Crimean separatism set a precedent for similar movements in other European countries with autonomous formations. The established European borders should remain unchanged as a prerequisite for security, stability, and civic peace.

Ladies and Gentlemen, one should admit that the situation in some regions within Europe provides no cause for complacency. We are witnessing a number of alarming developments: international disputes, interethnic conflicts, local warfare, economic crises, and anomalous demographic, migrational, and environmental processes. This is why Ukraine welcomes the intensification of efforts to find the ways and means of strengthening stability and security in Europe. There is no doubt that the future European security system should be based on such fundamental principles as the indivisibility of security and its all-embracing, comprehensive nature, in every aspect — military, political, humanitarian, economic, environmental, and others — as well as a need for close interaction and cooperation between states and international institutions in the field of security.

The validity of this last point is vividly proven by the joint involvement of the United Nations, NATO, OSCE, and other international institutions in the peace process in Bosnia-Herzegovina. These organizations, along with the Council of Europe, the European Union, the Western European Union, and the North Atlantic Cooperation Council, given proper coordination, are able to solve the most complex problems of international security most efficiently. I would like to note with satisfaction that the Council of Europe is also active in this area. It has done a great deal to implement the concept of democratic security, proclaimed by the council's Vienna summit.

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In the context of all-European security, Ukraine pays considerable attention to regional stability, first of all through the development of bilateral relations with its neighbors, on the basis of universally recognized rules of international law. Our country has no territorial claims against any country and rejects any territorial claims against itself.

A Ukrainian-Russian dialogue is underway. We strictly adhere to the premise that our future strategic partnership with our northern neighbor should be based on respect for state sovereignty, noninterference in internal affairs, territorial integrity, and the inviolability of borders. Ukraine sees it as an important factor of regional stability in Eastern Europe, an essential element of the continental security architecture.

We cooperate actively with subregional international organizations, such as the Black Sea Economic Cooperation and the Central European Initiative, where Ukraine will become a full member in the very near future.

We believe that increased attention should be paid today to the economic and environmental aspects of security. Continuing economic decline and crisis phenomena, particularly within economies in transition, has been and remains a source of new tensions, instability, and complications in international relations, to say nothing of the threat to international security posed by possible environmental disasters. The tragedy at Chernobyl, whose 10th anniversary is marked this week, teaches us that the elimination of the enormous damage caused by it is an international problem, insoluble without the united support and financial aid of the entire world community.

I would like to note with satisfaction that Ukraine welcomes the decisions of the G-7 summit in Moscow. It made the first important step toward concrete cooperation among these countries in overcoming the aftermath of the Chernobyl disaster.

Ms. Chairwoman and Members of Parliament, the domestic situation in Ukraine and its international position give every reason to be optimistic about the future. We will continue along the road we have marked out. The main condition for a strong democracy in our country lies in the very existence of an independent Ukrainian state. Today, we are building other necessary elements of a democratic system: a civic society, the supremacy of the law, and a market economy; and we have to complete this within a much shorter space of time compared to the traditional democracies. But we are confident that with our determination and your understanding and support, we will travel this road much more quickly, and together build a unified, democratic, and prosperous Europe. Thank you, Ms. Chairwoman.

Ukraine: Kuchma: CIS Fails as Association of Former Soviet Republics

LD2404124596 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1015 GMT 24 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] STRASBOURG, April 23 (Interfax-Ukraine) — Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma stated that "the Commonwealth of Independent States is a failure as an association of former Soviet republics."

He told reporters after his speech at the session of the Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly that "all subsequent unions of former Soviet republics will have the same results as the CIS."

He said, however, that the creation of a union between Russia and Belarus is "an inalienable right of these two states." He also said that "Ukraine chose its own road back in December 1991 in a referendum during which the people voted for independence and sovereignty."

"We shall advance along this road in the future," he said.

He stated that the Russian State Duma's March decision denouncing the Belovezhskaya Pushcha agreements "is irrelevant for Ukraine from the legal point of view."

In answer to a question about the settlement of the Chechen problem, he said that he supports President Yeltsin's policy of settling the conflict peacefully, but noted at the same time that he does not support "the measures used today in dealing with this problem."

Kiev is guided by the principle of Russia's territorial integrity, said Kuchma.

Ukraine: Kuchma: NATO Entry Procedure Should Resemble EU

LD2404124496 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1015 GMT 24 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] KIEV, April 24 (Interfax-Ukraine) — Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma believes that the mechanism of entering NATO should mimic the procedure for admitting new members to the European Union. "In this case only democratic states, civilized in the European manner, could be admitted to NATO," he told a press conference in Strasbourg (France) Tuesday.

Ukraine cannot agree to the fact that "on the one hand, a state expresses its wish to join NATO and, on the other hand, moves its armed forces to Ukraine's borders."

In addition, there should be no nuclear weapons on the territories of countries joining NATO, Kuchma said.

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"We advocate announcing central Europe as a nuclear free zone," he said.

"One of the best variants" is Ukraine's non-allied neutral status, Kuchma said.

Asked whether Ukraine will change its status if Russia toughens its position with respect to NATO, Kuchma said that the country's leadership "has not grown numb in its decision-making."

"If the situation changes, decisions may change as well," he said.

Ukraine: Kuchma: Ukraine's Strategic Aim is To Join EU

LD2304151196 Kiev UNIAN in Ukrainian 1030 GMT 23 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Strasbourg — Ukraine is pursuing stage by stage the course of rapid integration into the European processes and the expansion of its participation in the work of European and transatlantic organizations and structures, said [Ukrainian President] Leonid Kuchma, speaking at the plenary session of the Council of Europe's parliamentary assembly.

A UNIAN special correspondent reports that Kuchma said that "Ukraine's strategic aim is to become a full member of the European Union."

Kuchma urged the members of parliament of the EU states to accelerate the ratification by their parliaments of the 1994 agreement On Partnership and Cooperation between Ukraine and the EU.

Ukraine: Kuchma: No Acknowledgement of Romanian Territorial Claims

LD2404153896 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1248 GMT 24 Apr 96

[From the "Diplomatic Panorama" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma affirmed that Kiev will not acknowledge any Romanian territorial pretensions forcing Europe to redraw its maps.

The normalization of Ukrainian-Romanian relations is possible on the basis of all the decisions of post-war conferences beginning with the Helsinki Act, Kuchma said.

He rejected citations of certain secret clauses in the Molotov- Ribbentrop pact, on the basis of which some Romanian politicians are speaking of a possible re-examination of the border between the two countries.

Ukraine: Kuchma on Locating Russia's Black Sea Fleet in Sevastopol

LD2404124096 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1015 GMT 24 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] STRASBOURG, April 24 (Interfax-Ukraine) — Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma is confident that the problem of locating Russia's Black Sea Fleet in Sevastopol "will definitely be solved."

"The decision will be based on the interests of Ukraine, although Russia's interests will not be neglected, either," he told reporters in Strasbourg after his speech at the Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly.

"Progress has been made lately in the talks on the Black Sea Fleet problem" said Kuchma. The problem of locating the Russian fleet in Crimea has been settled, but that of locating it in Sevastopol still persists, he said. There is no progress in this area, he added.

Ukraine confirms, he continued, that the Russian fleet's main base must be located in Sevastopol. Russia argues, however, that "Sevastopol is the base of the Black Sea Fleet."

"Ukraine will never accept such a wording," he said.

Ukraine: Moroz Worried Over Possible NATO Expansion to East

WS2504090996 Kiev INTELNEWS in English 0035 GMT 25 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kiev, April 24. Parliament Speaker Oleksandr Moroz was quoted by Vikna TV news as saying during his official visit to France on Wednesday that accelerated NATO extension to the East "may cause negative consequences" and worries him.

Moroz met Wednesday with a the head of the French Senate.

President Leonid Kuchma, speaking at the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly session on Tuesday, said "we are not against the idea of NATO expansion."

"But we imagine such expansion as a simultaneous, evolutionary and open process, which would not create a situation of tension."

Ukraine: Moroz Discusses Chernobyl With French Officials

LD2404195496 Kiev UNIAN in Ukrainian 1745 GMT 24 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Paris — Ukrainian Supreme Council Chairman Oleksandr Moroz believes that the

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results of the Moscow summit of the G-7 and Russia, also attended by Ukraine, at which problems of closing the Chernobyl nuclear power station were discussed, require thorough analysis. At a meeting on 24 April with Claude-Gerard Marcus, the head of the French delegation to the North Atlantic Assembly, emphasized that the conditions for aid to Ukraine should be studied, as well as "who will remain with what interests now and in 10 years time" [sentence as received]. Moroz emphasized that aid should not be given on credit conditions, because the Chernobyl nuclear power station "results from the activity of all civilization." The parliament chairman stressed the inadmissibility of a repeat of the situation, which arose after Ukraine gave up strategic nuclear weapons. As the promised financial assistance should have amounted to approximately $5 billion, but in fact amounted to $120 million, Moroz stressed that closure of the Chernobyl nuclear power station is not in Ukraine's interests. However, its policies on the issue of closing the Chernobyl nuclear power station are undervalued in the world.

The parliament chairman emphasized that one of the aims of the visit to France was to try to draw that state's attention to the stance on the problem of closing the Chernobyl nuclear power station, as well as to destroy the stereotype of the danger of operating the station, which, according to the International Atomic Energy Agency's conclusions, meets international standards.

Heorhiy Filipchuk, the chairman of the Supreme Council Commission for Ecological Policy, emphasized that the problem of the station's safety now needs to be resolved, because at present there is no single point of view on this problem.

On 24 April Moroz also met the leadership of the French Ministry of Civil Service, State Reform, and Decentralization. The French side acquainted the Ukrainian delegation with the structure of local self-government bodies. The parliament chairman stressed that evidently there was a need for a similar structure in Ukraine.

Ukraine: Official on Abiding by Nuclear Arms Withdrawal Schedule

LD2404124996 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1015 GMT 24 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] KIEV, April 24 (Interfax-Ukraine) — Ukraine so far is abiding by the schedule of nuclear arms withdrawal from its territory, but "physical circumstances" may prevent this in the future, Secretary of the Ukrainian National Security Council Vladimir Gorbulin told a briefing in Kiev Wednesday.

"Under all documents, the arms withdrawal shall be completed in the first half of 1996," he said. Then everything will depend on fulfillment of the tripartite statement of Ukrainian, Russian and U.S. presidents of January 14, 1994.

"It is not easy to withdraw missile units and not receive a single fuel assembly for our nuclear power plants from Russia in the first quarter," said Gorbulin.

Commenting on the Black Sea Fleet problem, he said "Ukraine will not leave Sevastopol, it is impossible." The Kiev visit of Russian President Boris Yeltsin to dwell on the Black Sea Fleet settlement "may be held before the presidential elections in Russia," said Gorbulin.

He estimated the decision of Russian Defense Minister Pavel Grachev to suspend division of the Black Sea Fleet as "temporary." Gorbunov thinks it may be caused by criticism of Grachev by his Russian opponents.

As for the law on status of foreign troops on Ukrainian territory, it can be adopted in the future but "Ukraine hardly needs it now," said the Security Council secretary.

Ukraine: Nuclear, High-Tech Cooperation With China Needed

AU2504114096 Kiev URYADOVYY KURYER in Ukrainian 20 Apr 96 p 7

[Report by Oleksandr Maystrenko: "Our Atomic Specialists Have Shown Interest in the Chinese Market"]

[FBIS Translated Text] International cooperation in nuclear power engineering grows year after year. This is due to several reasons, among them two especially significant ones. First, integration of efforts in this sphere yields huge profits through the implementation of joint projects. The second aspect — the nuclear industry has quite specific characteristics, such as safety and the problem of spent fuel. Resolution of these and other problems requires the concentration of considerable research and financial potential and experience.

It is encouraging that the Ukrainian atomic power engineering has lately been actively cooperating with such advanced countries as the United States, France, Germany, and Great Britain. However, the fast development of nuclear power engineering in southeastern Asia dictates the urgent need to turn attention to countries of that region.

Recently, a delegation of Ukraine's State Committee for Nuclear Energy returned from China. It was there at the invitation of the Chinese State Corporation for Nuclear Energy. The Ukrainian atomic specialists were headed by Nur Nigmatullin, first deputy chairman of the State

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Committee for Atomic Energy, and the Chinese — by Chen Zhaobo [name as transliterated].

The sides discussed and signed the Accord on Cooperation in the Sphere of Utilization of Atomic Energy. It envisages participation in joint projects in such directions as extraction of fuel, processing of the fuel cycle, physical protection of atomic power engineering and industrial facilities, and so on.

Incidentally, this is the second such accord signed by Ukraine after it became independent. Last year, we concluded a similar accord with Canada.

The Ukrainian delegation also delivered to the Chinese side for consideration a draft accord between the governments of Ukraine and the People's Republic of China on cooperation in the sphere of peaceful utilization of atomic energy.

Why is it that, this time, precisely China has become our business partner? The answer lies in the fast rate of development of the Chinese power engineering, in particular atomic. By the year 2000, the government of this Asian country plans to increase the capacity of its atomic plants from 2 million kilowatts to 20 million kilowatts.

The Chinese now have a contract with the French on building China's third nuclear plant in Lingo [name as transliterated], near Hong Kong. Talks with Russia and Canada on building two atomic electric power plants were successful.

Yet another fact indicates that the attitude in China toward the development of nuclear power engineering is very serious: The minister of atomic industry who is in charge of just three power units with capacities that are low by world standards is a member of the Politburo of the Chinese Communist Party Central Committee — the supreme state body. We still remember very well what this implies.

Nur Nigmatullin, who signed the accord on behalf of Ukraine's State Committee for Atomic Energy, commented upon the results of the visit to China: "Today, the whole world has come to believe in Chinese market transformations. One can hardly find a better confirmation of this than $30 billion investments a year in the country's economy. As regards the cooperation between Ukraine and China in the sphere of nuclear power engineering, one can be sure that it will be fruitful for both countries. China showed particular interest in Kharkiv turbines and pumps and also in research developments of Ukrainian design institutes.

"China is for us, first and foremost, a huge and promising market."

Such contacts may and must yield practical advantages to Ukraine. It is no secret that raw materials constitute a lion's share of our exports. To China, we have only been supplying metal and fertilizers. It is now time to act more decisively. We have something to offer at the level of most advanced technologies.

Ukraine: U.S. Ambassador Interviewed on Policies

WS2404135496 Warsaw GAZETA WYBORCZA in Polish 24 Apr 96 p 9

[Interview with U.S. Ambassador to Ukraine William G. Miller by Andrzej M. Zaucha; in Kiev, date not given: "Not To Fear Russia"]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Zaucha] Warren Christopher has recently said in Kiev that Ukraine is a major element in European security. What is Ukraine's position in the world according to the United States?

[Miller] Ukraine is the second largest state in Europe after Russia. It has the fourth largest air force in the world and the second largest army in Europe. Until June, Ukraine will be in possession of nuclear arms; it also has a huge potential to produce modern arms. Ukraine has a strong agriculture and vast reserves of natural resources: coal, oil and natural gas.

The Ukrainians fought for their independence for hundreds of years. Now they are building their own state, within which a civic society is forming. Ukraine is a very important partner for us not only because of its natural riches, but also because it is a democracy.

[Zaucha] The United States changed its attitude towards Kiev only two years ago. Earlier, even after the USSR had already collapsed, it saw only Moscow. Why the change?

[Miller] We discovered this country — that is the main reason. Previously Ukraine was largely unknown in the world. The state came into existence barely four years ago. In the very beginning, the most important question was whether Ukraine was capable of creating and retaining an independent state. Today, the answer is obvious. Our experience tells us the Ukrainians are capable of retaining their sovereignty. This does not mean our attitude towards Russia has changed. We hope Russia, too, will become a democratic and civic society with a booming economy.

[Zaucha] What does Washington think of Russian-Ukrainian relations?

[Miller] We hope those relations will remain close. Both countries have a long-standing tradition of mutual trade; they have many cultural ties and there are

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solid foundations for developing economic and cultural relations.

We do not think Russia poses a threat to Ukraine. There is no reason to claim these countries cannot exist as separate, independent states.

[Zaucha] Ukrainian politicians maintain that Russia is the largest threat to Ukraine.

[Miller] The largest threat to Ukraine's sovereignty is its own economy. Success in developing a strong economy will be the best guarantee of sovereignty. This is, in fact, a strategic task for Kiev.

[Zaucha] Economic reform will take decades. Ukraine is already third on the list of the largest beneficiaries of financial aid from the United States. Russia has fallen to fourth place.

[Miller] The transition from a Soviet economy to a free market, and integration with the international economic system requires aid from international institutions — primarily from the G-7, but also other financial organizations. Ukraine is receiving such aid.

Naturally, the United States is willingly taking part in solving political problems. When Ukraine and Russia ask us, we try to help whenever conflicts and controversies appear. Generally speaking, however, relations on the Washington-Moscow-Kiev axis are very good.

[Zaucha] Moscow probably does not want to ask the United States for help in solving problems with Ukraine. The most recent example is the Black Sea Fleet.

[Miller] From our point of view, the Ukrainians and the Russians have been trying to solve the issue sensibly and objectively. There is an ongoing, constructive dialogue; force was never employed. The military aspect of dividing the Black Sea Fleet is the least complicated. The largest problems are dividing the estate and the conditions on which Russian forces are to be stationed in Crimea. Their solution requires specifying the limits of the authority and the sovereignty of both states. This will — naturally — take some time.

[Zaucha] Has Ukraine already become a sphere of influence for the United States?

[Miller] I would not put it that way. We are very interested in Ukraine remaining independent and sovereign; we support the construction of a modern democratic society. If Ukraine succeeds, its independence will be secure after the long dark period of oppression during the USSR era. We are not interested in conquering the territories of others. Independence and sovereignty are the two values we always respect and support.

National Affairs

Ukraine: Fire Levels 5 Villages Near Chernobyl Zone

MK2504112096 Moscow SEGODNYA in Russian 25 Apr 96 p 7

[Report by Zakhar Butyrskiy from Kiev under the "Ukraine" rubric: "Fire in the Exclusion Zone. Five Villages Burnt in the Chernobyl Area"]

[FBIS Translated Text] A giant fire has broken out several kilometers outside the infamous Chernobyl nuclear power plant in the so-called exclusion zone. The fire raged over a territory of 10 hectares. It burnt 150 hectares of grass cover, several hectares of forest, as well as 30 buildings. No casualties have been reported. A total of 150 people were evacuated from the site of the fire. In all likelihood, the fire was caused by former residents of the exclusion zone who are once a year allowed to visit their former homes and grave sites. The weather — very dry and sunny — was also conducive to the spread of the fire. Currently, the most worrisome question is where the wind has blown and where it will be blowing from the fire site, because radioactive ash can travel hundreds of kilometers by air.

Vladimir Gorbulin, security adviser to the Ukrainian president, told your SEGODNYA correspondent that the fire was caused by negligence and had no catastrophic consequences. He cautioned against dramatizing the situation. According to the report by the Ukrainian civil defense staff, the fire was put out on Tuesday evening [23 April]. The radiation background in the area was normal. A government commission has departed for the fire site to investigate the situation.

Ukraine: Officials Cited on Cause, Threat of Chernobyl Fires

WS2504112996 Kiev INTELNEWS in English 0035 GMT 25 Apr 96

[By Halia Pavliva, INTELNEWS Staff Writer]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kiev, April 24. A series of grass and forest fires which started Tuesday near the Chernobyl nuclear power plant continued to burn on Wednesday, threatening populated areas in Ukraine and Belarus.

Ukrainian officials said that radiation in the 20-mile evacuated zone around the plant has not increased and a spokesman for the United States Embassy's Consular section said that while the fire poses no danger to Kiev residents, "we're continuing to monitor."

But officials in nearby Belarus, which lies in the path of prevailing winds from Chernobyl and suffered massive

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environmental damage when the plant's fourth reactor blew up 10 years ago, have observed increased radiation levels in the wake of the fire, according to Reuters news service.

Ukrainian officials blamed the five separate fires on commemoration of an Orthodox Christian day of remembrance by illegal settlers in the zone, which has been sealed off with barbed wire since the disaster.

The largest of the fires started at 11:30 a.m. Tuesday in Tolstiy Lis, an abandoned village about 14 miles west of the plant, and has not been put out so far. According to Civil Defense spokesman Oleh Bykov, the fire was localized by 7 p.m. that day.

"The radiation level has not changed and poise no threat for lives of people residing in the zone," Bykov said.

According to the official, the ranks of the illegal settlers were swelled over the past weekend by people who came to visit cemeteries for the observance, at which worshippers normally carry candles.

"The fire arose due to a large inrush of the people," the Civil Defense spokesman said. "This fire is difficult to be put out because it arose in five spots."

The fire has consumed about 440 acres of grassland and forest in the area, in addition to more than 10 farm houses, he said.

The danger, according to Bykov, is that the area's peat bogs continue to burn, and are especially difficult to extinguish due to the dry conditions that have prevailed over the past several days.

Greenpeace activists contend there is danger of spreading radioactive contamination. This is particularly true of a separate fire in a nearby woodland area (Stariy Sepelichy) since forests retain radioactivity longer than farmland, the group's international nuclear program spokesman, Anthony Froggatt, said in Kiev.

"This is the type of occurrence that releases radioactivity into the atmosphere," Froggatt said, adding that it's difficult to project the dimension of the increase.

Froggatt said Greenpeace had contacted the radiological monitoring unit in the abandoned zone and said that in at least one area, there was an increase by a factor of 45, but the report was unconfirmed.

But Borys Stolyarchuk, an official of the Environment Ministry, painted a less ominous picture, saying that "radiation level at the external site, five kilometers from the fire center, of the Chernobyl nuclear power plant has changed only by one-thousandth of a microroentgen."

Stolyarchuk, who is in charge of the issues related to the plant at the ministry's Administration for Nuclear Regulation, refused to talk about radiation level in the fire center "since it is taking place in the 30-kilometer zone."

"According to official data, there is no change in the radiation level of the zone," said Valeriy Idelson, head of the plant's representative office in Kiev, who was also reluctant to speak of any matters happening outside of the plant territory per se.

"Since grass is burning, which is replaced every year and therefore does not contain the old radioactive fallout, there could not be any increase in the radiation level," Idelson said.

Ukraine: Air Radiation Level Increased Around Chernobyl Due to Fires

LD2404194596 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1735 GMT 24 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] KIEV, April 24 (Interfax - Ukraine) — The radionuclide content in the air in the 30-kilometer zone around the Chernobyl nuclear power station increased two to 30 times as a result of fires.

Nevertheless, the concentration of cesium-137 remained just over one-tenth of the admissible value in the town of Pripyat and the village of Staryie Shepelichi.

Andrey Sukhoruchkin, deputy chief engineer of the Pripyat-based regional environment monitoring and dosimetry service, told Interfax - Ukraine that the intensity of radioactive radiation has not changed outside the area hit by fires. He said that the fire brigades and other people in the area where the radiation level is somewhat higher than usual are wearing anti-radiation suits.

There is no danger for the population outside the area, Sukhoruchkin aid.

Vladimir Loginov, deputy chairman of the Ukrainian civil defense headquarters, told Interfax - Ukraine that about 1,000 people are now fighting the fires, which have been brought under control. Helicopters will fly over the area to warn of new fires.

The fires, which started on April 23, destroyed over 200 hectares of grassland.

Ukraine: Chernobyl Plant Incident Causes 'Slight' Radiation Increase

LD2504110996 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1103 GMT 25 Apr 96

[By Mikhail Melnik]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] KIEV April 25 (Itar-Tass) — An incident which caused a slight increase in

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the radioactive background occurred at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant in Ukraine on the eve of the 10th anniversary of the disaster which rocked the plant on April 26, 1986.

Spokesman of the plant Valeriy Idelson told Tass on Thursday that radioactive dust got on the floor of four premises while filters were replaced on Wednesday at the air-purification station situated at the third reactor and working to purify the air inside the "sarcophagus" of the fourth reactor which exploded ten years ago.

Idelson said the dust had been removed overnight and the radioactive background did not exceed the norm despite a slight increase.

He added that the incident took place because of violations of technological rules.

Ukraine: Spokesman Discusses Chernobyl Plant Radiation Incident

LD2504113396 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1126 GMT 25 Apr 96

[By Mikhail Melnik]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] KIEV April 25 (itar-Tass) — An incident which caused a slight increase in the radioactive background occurred at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant in Ukraine on the eve of the 10th anniversary of the disaster which rocked the plant on April 26, 1986.

Spokesman of the plant Valeriy Idelson told Tass on Thursday that radioactive dust got on the floor of four premises while filters were replaced on Wednesday at the air-purification station situated at the third reactor and working to purify the air inside the "sarcophagus" of the fourth reactor which exploded ten years ago.

Idelson said the dust had been removed overnight and the radioactive background did not exceed the norm despite a slight increase.

The radioactive background was 330 microroentgen per hour at the plant and 80 microroentgen per hour at the nearby settlement of Pripyat.

The spokesman said the incident had occurred because of violations of technological norms.

The press centre of the plant also said that the fire which raged in the 30-kilometre security zone around Chernobyl on Tuesday did not seriously affect the radioactive situation.

The fire destroyed five houses which had been abandoned since the nuclear disaster in 1986, as well as five hectares of forests and 230 hectares of grass.

150 people, who arrived to the graves of their relatives in the 30-kilometres zone, were urgently evacuated.

Incidentally, the press centre said that the fire had been caused by candles left by visitors at the graves of their relatives.

There has been a total of 750 fires in the 30-kilometres zone since 1986 in which 123 people were killed and 1,100 various buildings destroyed.

366 firefighters are currently guarding the zone.

Ukraine: National Security Advisor Assesses Chernobyl's Safety

WS2504091096 Kiev INTELNEWS in English 0035 GMT 25 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kiev, April 23. "As we see the Chernobyl safety problem, the plant's nuclear safety today is not in that its technical operation should be banned, but in that, first, the problem of sarcophagus should be solved, and, second, the problem of exhausted nuclear fuel and radioactive wastes should be solved," said Volodymyr Horbulin, chairman of the presidential National Security Council, Tuesday.

According to the security secretary, the problem of Chernobyl zone should also be solved. As of today, there are almost 800 so-called "burial grounds (where radioactively contaminated machinery and hardware are kept), whose future could be hardly predicted presently," Horbulin said.

He said the issue was stated in this fashion at the recent Moscow summit of the Group of Seven industrialized nations, and the position got "active support" from French, U.S. and Russian Presidents Jaques Chirac, Bill Clinton and Boris Yeltsin.

The main result of the discussion was that all the G-7 leaders and Yeltsin consented that the Ukrainian-G-7 memorandum signed in Canada last December needs to be "provided with a reliable mechanism of its execution, and first of all, from the financial point of view," Horbulin said.

"For the first time, all the leaders confirmed that, indeed, to close the Chernobyl nuclear power plant by the year of 2000, at least $3 billion is needed or even more," the security secretary said and added: "In my view, it is the main result for us as a state."

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Belarus

Belarus: Foreign Ministry Calls Paznyak Tour 'Wittingly Slanderous'

WS2504093896 Minsk BELAPAN in English 0636 GMT 25 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] On April 24 the Belarusian Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued an official statement in view of Belarusian Popular Front leader Zyanon Paznyak's tour of some countries in Central and East Europe. The statement reads, "The Republic of Belarus, as a contracting party of all the basic international agreements in the field of human rights, undoubtedly recognises the human right to the free expression of views, including the right to spread any kinds of information. Nevertheless, in accordance with international law, the exercising of these rights entails special responsibility for the objectivity of the spread information, and the necessity to respect the rights and reputation of other persons and take into consideration the interests of states' public security."

Some statements made by the BPF [Belarusian Popular Front] leader during his public appearances in Kiev, Prague, Wroclaw, the Belarusian foreign office notes, "are of wittingly slanderous character, contain invented and outrageous statements as regards the top-ranking officials in the Republic of Belarus, and are an attempt to show the internal political situation in the country in a distorted light."

The Belarusian foreign office expresses concern about the fact that officials in some states maintain contacts with the BPF leader, "which may be regarded as indirect support of the forces that are serving the purpose to distabilise the situation in Belarus, and as a result of this, losing their political influence."

"The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is empowered to announce that such actions by official circles in other countries may cause damage to friendly bilateral relations, and that they will be regarded by the Belarusian party as incongruous with the generally recognised principles and standards of international law, mutual respect and non-interference in the internal affairs of each other."

Belarus: Popular Front Briefs on Paznyak's Foreign 'Tour,'

WS2504090396 Minsk BELAPAN in English 0636 GMT 25 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The tour of East European countries by leaders of the Belarusian Popular Front [BPF] was to take place as far back as December last year. But Zyanon Paznyak, BPF chairman, and Syarhey Navumchyk, BPF press secretary, were able to go on this tour only this spring. In any case the deputy chairman of the Front, Lyavon Barshchewski, tried to persuade reporters of this at a news conference which was held on April 24. According to him, the results of the trip by Zyanon Paznyak and Syarhey Navumchyk are regarded now by the BPF leadership as "an outstanding break-through of the information blockade which existed as regards not only the Belarusian Popular Front but also Belarus as a whole."

It was also pointed out at the news conference that on April 24 Paznyak and Navumchyk were to meet with the Polish ex-president Lech Walesa in Gdansk. Their subsequent itinerary is being worked out. The two BPF leaders may visit Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxembourg and the United States where they will meet with well-known politicians.

Mr Barshchewski dwelt on the "speculations spread by the media that the BPF leaders allegedly acted as to emigrate". He read out a statement by Mr Paznyak which was received by telephone. Zyanon Paznyak insists that any emigration is out of question. "I will return to Belarus, even if there is martial law there, but only after I use every opportunity to inform politicians and the public of the Kremlin's plans, Lukashenka's activities and the situation with human rights in Belarus," Mr Paznyak said. The currently acting BPF deputy chairmen suggested to Paznyak and Navumchyk at one time that they should return to Minsk the day before April 26 to take part in arrangements for observing the 10th anniversary of the Chernobyl catastrophe. But they then withdrew this suggestion. According to Mr Barshchewski, if Paznyak and Navumchyk appear in Minsk, they will have no opportunity to come back to the West to continue their informational tour.

Moldova

Moldova: President Thinks Relations With Romania Need 'New Impetus'

LD2404152896 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1248 GMT 24 Apr 96

[From the "Diplomatic Panorama" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] CHISINAU, April 24 (Interfax) — The Moldovan President Mircea Snegur believes that relations with Moldova need a new impetus to enhance mutually beneficial cooperation. He made this statement on Tuesday as he received the visiting Romanian Foreign Minister Teodor Melescanu.

Snegur and Melescanu discussed "fuller integration of their countries." They also looked for the best ways of

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joining international structures and pointed to the need for simplifying border crossing rules, for joint customs posts and for free economic zones on the Moldovan-Romanian border and on the Danube, in which Ukraine would have a share.

Moldova: Moldovan, Transdniester Officials Meet, No Progress Made

LD2404165896 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1504 GMT 24 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] CHISINAU, April 24 (Interfax) — An official meeting between the Moldovan leadership and the administration of the self-proclaimed Transdniestr Moldovan Republic ended in Chisinau Wednesday without any concrete results.

The sides failed to agree either on the status of Transdnestria, or on any other major issue, Interfax has learned. In particular, problems relating to financial and banking cooperation and the introduction of the Moldovan leu in Transdnestria remained unresolved.

However, heads of the delegations Moldovan President Mircea Snegur and Transdnestr leader Igor Smirnov told journalists that the meeting served to bridge the gap between the sides' positions.

First Deputy Moldovan Justice Minister Mihay Busuliac and Transdnestr state secretary Valeriy Litskay, acting as heads of working groups of experts, said the Transdnestr issue would not be resolved in the near future.

They also said that the working groups had been charged with continuing their work in order to draft a memorandum for signing by both sides by May 8.

The memorandum must contain principles for the conflict's settlement, the main provisions for the future status of Transdnestria and guarantees of mediators in the settlement — an OSCE [Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe] mission, Russia and Ukraine.

The document is expected to be discussed at the next meeting of Moldovan and Transdnestr leaders, scheduled for May 11.

Concrete timing cannot be set for the resolution of such important issues, "because it leads to haste and problems remain unresolved as a result," Snegur and Smirnov concurred.

"I think that after today's meeting we will have the final version of the memorandum, but the upcoming May meeting will have much significance. It is important to define the sides' relations, not set the timing," said Snegur.

During the meeting the sides agreed to restore the bridges over the Dniester destroyed during the 1992 armed conflict, and to resume traffic across them.

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Kazakhstan

Kazakhstan: Nazarbayev: Yeltsin To Formalize Oil Pipeline Participation

LD2404173696 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1558 GMT 24 Apr 96

[From the "Presidential Bulletin" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] During an April 27 visit to Almaty by Russian President Boris Yeltsin Russia will finally formalize its participation in the Caspian Pipeline Consortium, Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev said on Tuesday [23 April].

Nazarbayev made the announcement at a news conference after the launching of a new book he has brought out.

An accord to establish the consortium as a legal entity is the subject of current talks, the Kazakh leader said. The document, to be signed by "three states and eight large oil firms," will have "global international significance." IF Note: The consortium was set up on June 17, 1992, by the governments of Kazakhstan and Oman to build and then manage an export oil pipeline to run from the Tengiz oil field in western Kazakhstan to the Russian Black Sea port of Novorossiisk. Russia in July 1992 signed a protocol on joining the consortium.

Half of the capital in the consortium is to belong to its three founders, Russia, Kazakhstan and Oman, but none of the three has yet decided what share it would like to have. Russia's Lukoil and Rosneft companies are to own 12.5 and 7.5 percent of the capital respectively. The United States' Chevron, Mobil Oil and Oryx are to have respectively 15, 7.5 and 1.75 percent, and British Gas and Italy's Agip 2 percent each. Kazakhstan's state holding company Munaigaz is to control 1.75 percent.

During Yeltsin's visit, Kazakhstan and Russia also plan to issue a joint declaration and a joint statement on "coordinated action in formulating the status of the Caspian Sea," Nazarbayev said. "We should make use of its wealth without standing in each other's way."

Several intergovernmental agreements are expected to be signed during the visit as well - on the use of the land of Kazakhstan's Baikonur space vehicle launching site, on pension guarantees for Baikonur's Russian personnel, on railway transport, and an accord to set up a joint venture to manufacture diesel engines.

Speaking about Russia's coming presidential election, Nazarbayev said "Kazakhstan will respect any choice the Russian people will make" but made clear he would like Yeltsin to be re-elected. "I have known Boris Yeltsin for a long time, we have come through many difficulties together and started reforms together," he said.

"Any abrupt change, the coming of any new person will bring about a need to get used to each other and may thwart the rapprochement of the two countries or reverse it," he said. "We wouldn't like that to happen."

"There is no alternative to friendship and good-neighborly relations between Kazakhstan and Russia," he went on. "We are determined to go ahead with the process of reforms and bring our nations closer together."

The Kazakh president said he took a centrist line in politics. "I come from the left wing myself and I don't deny this," he said. But, instead of being enmeshed in political struggles, Kazakhstan "will be building a social market economy."

Commenting on his book, "On the Threshold of the 21st Century," which is his second one after "Neither Right Nor Left" published in 1991, Nazarbayev said it "sets out the point of view of a person who found himself in the epicenter of important events which have taken place on one-sixth of the territory of the world (the territory of the Soviet Union)."

But the book is not one of memoirs - "that is not something an active politician should do," the president said. He pointed out that, despite being busy, he had worked on the book all by himself.

The book comprises three chapters. The first one goes into the causes of the collapse of the Soviet Union. The second one analyzes the initial stages of Kazakhstan's development as an independent state. The third one, entitled "Between East and West," describes Nazarbayev's numerous meetings with world leaders and Kazakhstan's steps to acquire an international position.

The book has been published by Kazakhstan's Oner publishing house in an edition of 25,000 in the Kazakh language and an edition of 30,000 in Russian. Nazarbayev said orders had come in for the book to be translated into English, Chinese and Turkish.

Kazakhstan: Nazarbayev Leaves for Shanghai To Discuss Border Issues

LD2504061896 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0605 GMT 25 Apr 96

[By Vladimir Akimov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] ALMATY, April 25 (Itar-Tass) — Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev has left for Shanghai today to attend a meeting on border

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issues scheduled for April 26 which will be attended by representatives of five countries.

Before departure, Nazarbayev told Itar-Tass that he regards the forthcoming signing of an agreement between Kazakhstan, China, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan as an event of a global historic importance.

Nazarbayev believes that this document will promote cardinal strengthening of confidence on the CIS border with China and will give a powerful impetus to the development of trade and economic relations between them which will be raised to a qualitatively new level, primarily, due to the joint development of railway transport.

Tajikistan

Tajikistan: Rakhmanov Welcomes OSCE Efforts in Central Asia

LD2404180796 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1558 GMT 24 Apr 96

[From the "Presidential Bulletin" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] President Emomali Rakhmanov welcomes efforts of the Organization on Security and Cooperation in Europe [OSCE] assisting in strengthening stability and cooperation in the Central Asia, says a message of the Tajik president to participants of the international seminar on issues related to strengthening confidence measures in this region. The seminar started its work in Dushanbe Wednesday under the auspices of the OSCE.

Tajikistan's Prime Minister Yahyo Azimov voiced Rakhmanov's message of greeting at the forum.

The seminar in Dushanbe is being held in the framework of the symposium Central Asia: Comprehensive Security in the Framework of the OSCE and Regional Challenges which was opened in Tashkent Tuesday. The final part of the symposium will be held in the Uzbek capital.

Rakhmanov expressed confidence that the OSCE activity in the Central Asia assists in "building bridges" between countries of the region and other states which are "within the sphere" of this authoritative international organization. This seminar, Rakhmanov said, "is another move in this direction and it is of great significance that this seminar is being held in the Tajik capital."

According to Rakhmanov, the OSCE forum will make "a serious contribution in strengthening peace and preventing conflicts both in Tajikistan and the Central Asian region as a whole."

For his part, addressing the seminar, representative of the OSCE secretary general Ya. Kubis said that "a renewed and reinforced feeling of confidence" is needed in the current period of changes and transformations ongoing in the Central Asian region. In addition, radical changes are taking place not only in the countries of the former "Eastern bloc" by in the other OSCE states as well.

To this effect Kubis stressed the need for the OSCE participation in solution of such issues as prevention of local conflicts, restoration of stability and peace in "hot-spots" and cancelling of really existing or "noticeable" threats to regional security. He also called to create a new system of regional security based on mutually beneficial cooperation.

The problems of the Central Asian region, Kubis said, "must be precisely drawn up and brought to the notice of the other part of the community of the OSCE countries." He is convinced that it is possible "to discuss all conflicts and to find the way out" in the framework of the OSCE.

Tajikistan: Tajik Rebel Leader Welcomes New UN Envoy

LD2504103396 (Clandestine) Voice of Free Tajikistan in Tajik 0600 GMT 25 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Professor Haji Akbar Turajonzoda, first deputy leader of the Islamic Movement of Tajikistan and chairman of the negotiating delegation of the United Tajik Opposition [at the Tajik talks], has written a letter to UN Secretary General Butrus Butrus-Ghali saying that the United Opposition Forces of Tajikistan welcomes the appointment of the new UN envoy to Tajikistan and believes that the latter, like his predecessor, Ramiro Piriz-Ballon, will make a contribution to establishing peace in Tajikistan.

Professor Turajonzoda adds that the Tajik opposition is ready to hold another round of talks.

As is known, the United Nations intends to hold another round of inter-Tajik talks by 26 May this year, when the temporary cease-fire, which has been violated constantly by the Dushanbe government, expires.

Uzbekistan

Uzbekistan: Karimov, Chirac Hold Talks in Paris

LD2304123596 Tashkent NARODNOYE SLOVO in Russian 23 Apr 96 p 1

[FBIS Translated Text] Paris, 22 Apr — Uzbek President Islam Karimov arrived in the French Republic on 21 April.

President Islam Karimov met with French President Jacques Chirac today in the Elysee Palace.

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During the talks they discussed the prospects for further development of economic, political, and cultural links between the two countries. It was specifically underlined that Uzbek-French relations go far back in history. A shining example of this is the correspondence between Amir Timur and Charles VI, King of France, at the beginning of the 15th Century. The French president handed the Uzbek president a copy of Amir Timur's message addressed to Charles VI in 1402.

The president of the Republic of Uzbekistan received Minister Delegate for Finance and Foreign Trade Galland at his residence today. They discussed the expansion of economic and trade relations between the two countries.

During the meeting, Uzbek Foreign Minister Komilov and Minister Delegate for Finance and Foreign Trade Y. Galland signed a convention on avoiding dual taxation and a financial protocol between the governments of the Republic of Uzbekistan and the French Republic.

In the afternoon the president of the Republic of Uzbekistan visited the National Assembly of the French Republic. At a meeting, in which members of the parliamentary group "Uzbekistan - France" participated, there was an exchange of opinions on the development of relations between the parliaments of the two countries.

President Islam Karimov also had a talk with French National Assembly chairman Seguen.

The visit by the president of the Republic of Uzbekistan continues.

Tajikistan: Karimov Ends Visit to France, Urges More Investment

LD2404174696 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1558 GMT 24 Apr 96

[From the "Presidential Bulletin" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] President Islam Karimov has ended a three-day visit to Paris by holding talks with his French counterpart Jacques Chirac and other officials. He is due back in Tashkent late on Wednesday.

During meetings with leading French bankers and company managers, the Uzbek leader spoke of good investment opportunities and investment protection guarantees in his country.

Karimov said although bilateral relations were evolving at a fast pace, they are not up to the potentials of the two countries whose economies can complement each other.

He also addressed an audience of French businessmen at a reception in the trade and commerce chamber in Paris.

At a meeting with FIGARO and PARIS MATCH correspondents, Karimov gave a picture of today's political, economic and social situation in Uzbekistan, its contacts with CIS states and other countries, and relations with France. Uzbekistan and France exchanged ratification papers following the signing of an outline political treaty with each other.

Karimov was also involved in a UNESCO conference dedicated to 660 years since the birth of Tamerlane.

IF Note: Born in 1336 and dying in 1405, Tamerlane had been the ruler of a powerful Central Asian state with a seat in Samarkand since 1370. He crushed the Golden Horde and went on conquests of Iran, India and Transcaucasia. Uzbekistan honors him as an outstanding statesman who largely contributed to the economic, political and cultural development of Central Asia.

Uzbekistan: Prime Minister Reads Karimov Statement at Symposium

LD2404183096 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1558 GMT 24 Apr 96

[From the "Presidential Bulletin" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Uzbek President Islam Karimov sent an address to the participants of a symposium on global security within the OSCE framework and regional challenges in Tashkent Wednesday.

Uzbek Prime Minister Otkir Sultanov read out Karimov's address at the symposium.

In part, Karimov expressed satisfaction about the fact that "this representative forum is taking place in Tashkent." "The meeting of representatives of various countries at this symposium under the OSCE is another evidence of the fact that this prestigious European institution is practically implementing the ideas of the Helsinki accords and keeps the problems of Central Asia and ways of their resolution in the focus of attention," he said.

"We regard this symposium as a logical continuation of the Tashkent seminar on security and cooperation in Central Asia," Karimov said. "This forum is evidence of the world community's openness for a constructive and open dialogue in the name of securing peace and stability both regionally and globally."

The OSCE willingness to react to the region's problems and needs in the new geopolitical conditions arouses ever increasing respect, he said.

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Karimov wished the participants and guests of the symposium productive and successful work, saying Uzbekistan is ready to further intensify constructive cooperation with the OSCE to find solutions to regional issues.

The symposium also discussed the creation of a reliable regional security system and the OSCE role in the establishment of stability and confidence in Central Asia.

The symposium stated that Central Asia is an inalienable zone of OSCE influence, and any its decision must take into account the needs of this region. "A dialogue between states and between people is required," it wrote in the final documents.

The Tashkent symposium will help realistically assess today's situation in the region and use OSCE experience in this area, the Uzbek Foreign Ministry's press service said.

The symposium, attended by representatives of over 30 OSCE member-states and various international institutions, continued discussing regional security issues in the Tajik capital of Dushanbe Wednesday. On Thursday, they are expected to return to Tashkent.

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Azerbaijan

Azerbaijan: President Aliyev Visits European Countries

NC2404191596 Baku Radio Baku Network in Azeri 1800 GMT 24 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Azerbaijani President Geydar Aliyev's visit to Western European countries is continuing. He has been holding fruitful contacts and talks in Luxembourg and Belgium. Our listeners already know that President Geydar Aliyev met NATO Secretary General Solana in Brussels and the U.S. ambassador to Belgium. He held talks on economic cooperation with Western Europe [words indistinct] and met the Armenian president in Luxembourg.

President Geydar Aliyev began his visit to Norway today.

Azerbaijan: Aliyev, Norwegian Minister Discuss Oil Cooperation

LD2404191796 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1816 GMT 24 Apr 96

[By Igor Pshenichnikov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] OSLO, April 24 (Itar-Tass) — Norwegian Prime Minister Gro Harlem Brundtland met visiting Azerbaijani President Geydar Aliyev on Wednesday to discuss cooperation in the field of oil extraction.

Brundtland and Aliyev, who is in Oslo on an official visit, signed a joint declaration on relations between the two countries which lays the "political foundation for such relations."

The declaration also "identifies future areas of cooperation between the two countries with a focus on the Norwegian state oil concern Statoil and other Norwegian companies operating in Azerbaijan."

Aliyev told Itar-Tass that his visit to Norway "aims at giving an impulse to further development of good and fruitful cooperation between Azerbaijan and Norway in the energy and economic fields."

"Norway has advanced experience in oil extraction and its technologies are of great interest to us," he added.

On Thursday [25 April], Aliyev will have talks with Statoil which is a member of an international consortium to develop Azerbaijani oil fields in the Caspian Sea.

Azerbaijan: Aircraft Comes Under Fire From Armenian Forces

LD2404165296 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1545 GMT 24 Apr 96

[By ITAR-TASS correspondents Sevindzh Abdullayeva and Viktor Shulman]

[FBIS Translated Text] Baku, 24 Apr — A Yak-40 passenger aircraft belonging to the Azerbaijan Airlines state concern, which was flying from Naftalan to Baku, came under fire today over the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict zone. No one was hurt. The Azerbaijan side lays responsibility for the shooting on the Armenian armed formations.

The aircraft came under fire from the ground and the pilot had to make an emergency landing.

A statement by the Azerbaijan Defense Ministry released on this matter today said that "the aircraft, with 20 passengers on board — mainly women, children and old people — was flying at a low level making it possible to distinguish clearly the type of aircraft. A preliminary inspection of the aircraft has revealed three holes".

Azerbaijan's defense department has assessed the shooting at a civil aircraft as "a provocation aimed at wrecking the top-level peace talks now being held with the aim of settling the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict."

Georgia

Georgia: Shevardnadze Speaks of Value of Accord With EU

LD2504101396 Tbilisi Radio Tbilisi Network in Georgian 0700 GMT 25 Apr 96

[Statement by Georgian President Eduard Shevardnadze at a news conference in Tbilisi on 24 April on the results of his visit to the Benelux countries — recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] The documents we signed in Brussels and Luxembourg, where we went before Brussels, are so comprehensive that I have to use a written text in order to draw your attention to the main points.

The process of Georgia's integration in the international community has advanced to a qualitatively new stage. On 22 April — I am confident that this day will remain in Georgia's history as an important date — we signed an agreement on partnership and cooperation between Georgia on one hand and the European Union and its member countries on the other. Having signed this document, Georgia and the European Union created a firm legal basis for their relations, and this will

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enable our country to enjoy equal opportunities in cooperation with European structures and states in political, economic, and other spheres of public life.

The document describes comprehensively Georgia's achievements in building a democratic state and a civic society. In particular, it indicates Georgia's fruitful efforts in implementing the norms of justice; securing respect for human rights, especially the rights of ethnic minorities; establishing a multiparty system; holding free and democratic elections; and creating political and economic systems based on the principle of liberalizing the economy with the aim of transferring to a market economy.

I would regard as most significant a proviso according to which the support for Georgia's independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity will promote peace and stability in Europe. Thus, these fundamental values of the Georgian state go far beyond the country's internal problems and — I do not think this to be an exaggeration — become a common European factor.

A political dialogue has been declared as the most important form of partnership. This will naturally strengthen Georgia's links with European countries and will allow the positions of the parties on subjects of mutual interest to become closer.

It should be noted that the various forms of dialogue — I mean a cooperation council at the ministerial level, regular meetings of senior officials, diplomatic acts and so on — will be held on a (?regional) basis, and this should assist in ending conflicts, reducing tension, and strengthening security and stability in the Transcaucasus. Political contacts based on equal rights will undoubtedly increase Georgia's international prestige.

A rather broad area is being established in the economic sphere, and this will have a crucial significance for implementing structural and systemic reforms in Georgia and for facilitating our country's integration in the international economic associations. The mutually secured most favored nation treatment, stipulated in the agreement, will obviously become a serious support for economic cooperation. The most favored nation treatment means distinguished regulations for collecting customs duties and fees, excise, and taxes, the ways of their payment, for selling and buying products at the internal market and transporting the products. The most favored nation's treatment should create a basis for Georgia's entry to the European market and for the enhancement of its export potential, since there will be no quantitative limitations to imported or transited goods. The agreement also displays the mechanism which will ensure the implementation of international commitments and the workings of the internal market.

A wide area for economic cooperation will be set up by implementing the provisos of the agreement which deal with business and investments. First of all, I can point out the establishment of working conditions which rule out any ethnic discrimination of citizens of Georgia in the countries of the European Union concerning pays and dismissing from jobs.

Georgia: Shevardnadze Views Chechen Settlement After Dudayev Death

LD2404162296 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1509 GMT 24 Apr 96

[By Tengiz Pachkoriya]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] TBILISI, April 24 (Itar-Tass) — Georgian President Eduard Shevardnadze said on Wednesday nobody could predict how Chechen rebel leader Dzhokhar Dudayev's death would influence the peace process in Chechnya.

"No one can tell what impact Dudayev's death will have on the peace process in Chechnya," Shevardnadze said.

"The death of anyone is a tragedy, especially for their relatives," he said.

According to him, Russian President Boris Yeltsin's settlement policies will not change.

Georgia: Shevardnadze To Meet With S. Ossetian Leader

LD2404170596 Tbilisi IBERIA in Georgian 1440 GMT 24 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Tbilisi, 24 Apr — Answering a question at a news conference held today, Georgian President Eduard Shevardnadze said that he assessed positively a proposal to meet Ludvig Chibirov, the leader of the South Osetian people's nikhas [parliament].

Commenting on [Chechen rebel leader] Dzhokhar Dudayev's death, Shevardnadze said that it was the individual's and his family's tragedy. Though, it is difficult to visualize what impact this event can have on Russian-Chechen conflict, he said. Shevardnadze also said that having chosen a peaceful means of settling the conflict, Boris Yeltsin had embarked on the right path.

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Georgia: Finland Grants Political Asylum to Former Prime Minister

LD2404171696 Moscow Radiostantsiya Ekho Moskvy in Russian 1500 GMT 24 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Finland today granted political asylum to Vissarion Gugushvili, the former Prime Minister of Georgia. Gugushvili left Georgia in 1992 after the regime of Gamsakhurdia was overthrown. He then took part in an abortive attempt to set up a center of armed opposition against President Eduard Shevardnadze.

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Estonia

Estonia: Temporary Fishing Agreement With Latvia Established

LD2404172796 Tallinn Estonian Television Network in Estonian 1800 GMT 23 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The [Estonian] Ministry of Foreign Affairs has handed over to the Latvian embassy the temporary fishing agreement approved by the Estonian Government. Prime Minister Tiit Vahi said that the fishing permit issued to the Latvian fishermen, within the area specified by Estonia, will come into effect under the conditions which apply to these areas at present. According to the prime minister, these apply equally to both Estonian and Latvian fishermen.

[Begin recording] [Vahi] The specific legal procedure and regulations for fishing are the same for Estonian and Latvian fishermen and will come into force at the same time. There are no differences. We have no plans for any changes in the fishing regulations for the time being and we simply allow the Latvians to fish under the same regulations in the same areas proposed.

[Correspondent Riina Koit] [passage omitted] At present there is no fishing in the Gulf of Riga as yet.

[Juri Kreek, deputy head of Border Guard Department's maritime section, identified by caption] It is not possible at present due to natural causes: The Gulf of Riga is covered with ice, to quite a large extent.

[Koit] [passage omitted] The agreement will come into force once the Latvian side has given its go-ahead and will run until 1 August. The agreement also states that the temporary agreement must not influence the border talks currently in progress. [end recording]

Estonia: Russian Minority Threatens To Pull Out of Conference

LD2404185296 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1558 GMT 24 Apr 96

[From the "Presidential Bulletin" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] A delegation of the Representative Assembly of the Russian-speaking minority in an open letter to President Lennart Meri on Wednesday threatened to pull out from the Round Table Conference of Ethnic Minorities initiated by Meri himself.

It says as instrument of dialogue of ethnic minorities and prevention of conflicts, the round table appears to be ineffective because its decisions taken together with members of parliament are being ignored by the top legislature. Nor does the Estonian government react to or support it activity.

As a result, says the letter, widespread expectations by loyal and law-abiding representatives of ethnic minorities were frustrated as were those by representatives of international agencies and other states who laid trust in the round table by giving it broad support.

The delegation sees no sense in further involvement in what it describes as a decorative attribute whose prestige is badly dented and tangible blow is dealt up Meri's prestige as president who was largely behind the round table idea.

The letter follows the parliament's adoption of a local election on April 17 which, the letter says, curtails the rights of a sizeable chunk of the electorate and provides for seeding candidates willing to stand in local elections. It says the new law caused a flare up of tension in the country.

Earlier the leaders of the United People's party and deputies from the Russian-dominated city of Narva appealed to Meri not to endorse the new law.

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